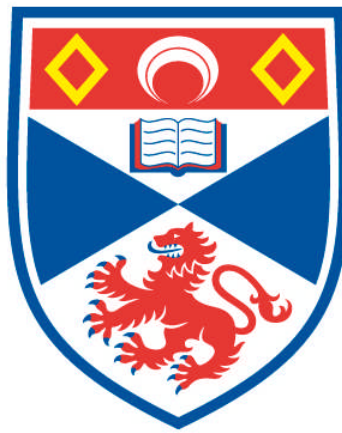


# **COMMUNITY PROJECTS AS LIMINAL SPACES FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES IN SCOTLAND**

**Svenja Meyerricks**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
University of St Andrews**



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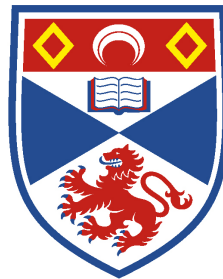
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# **Community Projects as Liminal Spaces for Climate Action and Sustainability Practices in Scotland**

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University of  
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of PhD  
at the University of St Andrews

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# Abstract

The potential of communities for sustainability learning and governance has generated substantial interest in sustainability discourses, but their specific roles and remits are not always critically examined. This thesis' original contribution to these discourses lies in the analysis of community projects as liminal spaces for pro-sustainable change that are limited in scope within wider political landscapes that do not sufficiently address wider challenges of an unravelling biosphere. The particular manifestation of community projects which emerges in Scotland as a result of Climate Challenge Fund funding made available by the Scottish Government is one example of sustainability governance at a local level. The present study draws upon data from field notes of eleven months of fieldwork, and semi-structured interviews with fifty-two informants, constructing two case studies with references to a third one. A transdisciplinary analysis of findings examines leadership and organisational structures and their implication for governance, and similarities and differences in practices and values identified within the case studies. Community projects are described as liminal spaces which facilitate the learning, practice-based and theoretical knowledge of sustainable practices (such as food growing or energy efficiency), and stimulate thinking on behalf of the group of participants or wider community. Community projects may also build temporary spaces demonstrating sustainable solutions visible to passers-by (such as raised vegetable beds in community gardens, or second-hand clothing in a swap shop). However, the longevity of these solutions is uncertain once the grant funding has come to an end. It is argued that in wider Scottish society, high-carbon lifestyles, inequalities and economic growth are the norm, and sustainable practices, community sustainability governance of tangible assets, and Education for Sustainable Development need to become less marginal and more widely embedded across all social and economic institutions.

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## Abbreviations

CBA	Community-based Adaptation
CCF	Climate Challenge Fund
CCSA	Climate Change (Scotland) Act
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon dioxide
CO <sub>2</sub> e	Carbon dioxide equivalent
CPP	Community Planning Partnership
DESD	Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GGWGEE	'Grow Green with Glasgow's East End'
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KSB	Keep Scotland Beautiful
PAR	Participatory Action Research
SD	Sustainable Development
SDC	Sustainable Development Commission
SEPA	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SSDS	Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy
RQ	Research Question
WOTWS	'Walk On The Wild Side'

# CHAPTER ONE - Introduction

## 1.0 The Thesis and Its Prologues

*“Truth for anyone is a very complex thing. For a writer, what you leave out says as much as those things you include. What lies beyond the margin of the text? ... When we tell a story we exercise control, but in such a way as to leave a gap, an opening. It is a version, but never the final one.” (Winterson 2012:8)*

In this thesis, I work towards conceptualising community projects for sustainability as liminal spaces within unsustainable systems. The unique contribution of community projects lies in the 'rehearsing' of sustainable practices they provide for their participants and within their localities, as well as the local impacts of these practices. Community projects therefore constitute sustainable thresholds: collective sustainable practices and spaces become manifest, even if they remain relatively marginal and may not indicate the presence of wider national and global transition processes towards sustainability.

This thesis analyses qualitative data primarily from three case studies (and out of these, of two in particular) of community projects funded by the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund (CCF). In the spirit of Winterson's (2012) quote, in this thesis I do not aim to tell the entire story of the CCF, or even of particular particular community projects - this would not be possible. Instead, this thesis presents open-ended narratives of aspects of the subject matter, contextualised in a particular time and particular locations. I analyse the case studies' leadership structures, organisational structures, volunteering patterns, practices, activities, and values, and conceptualise the role community organisations play as part of wider society. The findings suggest that the case studies' strengths lie in enabling their participants to learn sustainable practices in

place-based settings, and in demonstrating sustainability practices and visions (such as food growing, swapping instead of buying clothes, and regional planning for increased local resilience). However, community projects' contributions to a potential transition towards a more sustainable society are relatively marginal, and the projects constitute fleeting patterns of practices and values around sustainability. The goal of this thesis in sustainable development (SD) is not only to present an empirical piece of research and contribute to the existing literature around communities, sustainability and climate change. There is a spectrum of definitions of SD, which I elaborate on in chapter 2 - my own position is that of 'strong' (as opposed to 'weak') SD, which tends to be concerned with preserving the stock of natural capital (Hediger 2004:2) rather than with sustaining the economic status quo. Taking 'strong' SD as a guiding ethos, and following on from the principal findings, this thesis tentatively suggests pathways towards solutions to better integrate the practices, learning and outcomes of community projects in wider society, addressing researchers and policy makers.

This thesis contributes to the academic literature on communities and SD, including low-carbon communities (for example, see Banks 2003; Bauman 2001; Blackshaw 2010; Russell et al. 2013). The main themes of this thesis are elaborated on in chapter 2, which contains a literature review around communities, SD and climate action (section 2.3). Key terms are generally defined in chapter 2, or in the empirical chapters 5, 6 and 7 where they are relevant to the data analysis. As achieving an impact -or making a difference- is characteristic of research in SD (Franklin & Blyton 2011:6), this introductory chapter focuses on the 'real-world' anchoring of this thesis. Specifically, this chapter introduces the preceding events or prologues to this research project, and describes the underlying research questions (RQs) which steered the fieldwork and analysis. This chapter culminates in a 'road map' of the thesis, which illustrates how the different chapters fit together to present, analyse and discuss the findings and their implications.

Each research project is preceded by converging prologues which brought it into existence, and the events which preceded this thesis can mainly be divided in two prologues. The first prologue began long before my own involvement. In 2008 the

Scottish Government created the CCF, a grant body which by the time I began the research had funded 153 community groups to reduce carbon emissions and run various activities, for example growing local food, advising on or installing energy efficiency measures (see chapter 4 for a discussion of numbers and types of projects funded). In partnership with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Scottish Government funded a studentship to evaluate the CCF in 2009. The second prologue began with my own interests and history as a student and researcher. I have been interested in community projects and sustainability since writing my undergraduate dissertation about the beginnings of an ecovillage, and have been involved with and volunteered in community projects in Ecuador, Germany, India and Scotland. A focus on topics increasingly local to where I live grew out of my interests in human ecology and sustainability, and a desire in 'digging where I stand' by researching community projects in a Scottish context.

The two prologues converged when the PhD studentship to evaluate the CCF was won by Jan Bebbington, Rehema White and Stephen Reicher at the University of St Andrews, who became my supervisors. As part of the studentship, I completed a Masters of Research, the dissertation for which served as a basis for designing the research for the thesis. At this time, a report on the CCF by Brook Lyndhurst (2011) and academic papers on the CCF had not yet been published. Because of the limited remit of a Masters dissertation, the three projects that were to form the case studies ('Eigg Heritage Trust', 'Urban Roots' and 'Woodlands Community Garden') were chosen on an *ad hoc* basis, reflecting the practicalities of geographical and 'gatekeeper' access, with the expectation that they would likely convey some key issues CCF-funded community projects were facing.

“Firstly, findings suggested that among the enablers for behaviour change were social coherence of participants built via the development of a positive 'identity of place'. Respondents' remarks indicated that, where present, a community's sense of ownership over the place they inhabit helped catalyse communal action and a sense of responsibility towards the land. Secondly, findings suggested that volunteers taking part in the projects were in most cases not solely motivated by

concerns about climate change but had other, diverse motives for their engagement. This finding could give rise to concern about projects' framing. For example, if projects are solely framed in terms of carbon reductions, this may be a barrier to wider engagement of community members. Thirdly, some social and economic factors that were viewed to be barriers to success of projects were identified, such as inadequate low-carbon infrastructure. In addition, multiple aspects of social exclusion (where present) appeared to prevent local residents from taking part in community projects.” (Meyerricks 2010)

The outcomes of the preliminary study conveyed the importance of a sense of place to the projects' identities. The findings suggested that geographical, cultural or demographic patterns influence the shape and directions of community projects. The uniqueness of each of the three dissertation case studies with respect to their organisational structures, aims and strategies called for a qualitative research approach in the thesis research design which could highlights the richness of each narrative (this is further explored in chapter 4). Some themes which emerged in the dissertation findings warranted further exploration, in particular the effects of multiple deprivation and inequalities on the types of activities and priorities characterising a community project. Other themes which emerged in the dissertation and were further explored in the thesis are roles community projects can play in decentralising sustainability governance, awareness of barriers which may prevent community projects' aims to come to fruition, and the shapes of community projects in different social demographics and localities.

The unfolding of global climate change politics also helped to shape this research project. Climate change is a global issue, and community action on climate change needs to be evaluated in the context of the bigger picture. When I embarked on the Masters of Research programme in 2009, the Copenhagen Summit was imminent, and there was hope that international climate change negotiations could bring a breakthrough in producing a successor agreement to the Kyoto protocol (Parker et al. 2012:269). However, the negotiations did not meet this expectation; the interim political agreement which was produced instead, the Copenhagen Accord (Parker et al. 2012:282), is not legally binding. In the light of global institutions falling short of their



responsibilities to tackle climate change in the time frame necessary to counteract social and ecological crises, evaluating community projects' performance in tackling climate change and instigating behaviour change in an isolated manner would not do the topic justice. Hence, my focus shifted towards a conceptual analysis of the role of community groups in the light of the unfolding socio-environmental global crises.

## 1.1 The Research Questions

During the fieldwork, which started in 2011 and lasted eleven months, I attempted to find a way of delving into the 'messy' emerging narratives of community projects, while at the same time 'connecting the dots' between wider issues around sustainability governance and systemic unsustainability. The following research questions were explored:

*RQ1: How do the different styles of leadership within CCF projects impact on the engagement of project participants?* (Addressed in chapter 5)

*RQ2: In what ways do community projects facilitate learning about issues of sustainability and climate change among their participants?* (Addressed in chapters 2 & 6)

*RQ3: How are 'communities' defined in CCF projects and how heterogeneous are communities that apply to the CCF?* (Partially addressed in chapters 5 & 6)

The notion of 'heterogeneity' in RQ3 proved problematic because it presumes community organisations to be closed entities. The question was answered by looking at community organisations' organisational structures, specifically whether they prioritised group activities or structural governance strategies (chapter 5). In addition, local dissent, and symptoms of multiple deprivation and inequalities (chapters 5, 6 & 7) suggested some fragmentation in the localities of the case studies. A final theme organically emerged from the findings, in line with 'grounded theory'<sup>1</sup> (Glaser & Strauss 1967), and

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1 Unlike in methodological approaches where the research design is pre-set, in grounded theory "there is a

lead to the final research question.

*RQ4: What role(s) do community projects play in wider Scottish society, and what are the barriers which limit their impact?* (Addressed in chapters 2, 3 & 7)

The themes emerging from research questions are unpacked in chapter 2, and empirically addressed through case studies, which are briefly introduced in the following section.

## 1.2 A Brief Introduction to the Case Studies

In-depth fieldwork yielding the data for a number of case studies sits at the empirical heart of this thesis. Due to the small-scale and local nature of projects funded, a case studies research strategy was well suited to delve into narratives of how these projects played out on the ground. The process and rationale for choosing case studies are explored in section 4.3. However, since they were such a crucial part of this thesis, the organisations and projects I eventually worked with merit a short introduction at this point.

The community organisations who ran the CCF-funded projects chosen for the fieldwork were *East Kilbride Development Trust* in South Lanarkshire, *Playbusters* in Glasgow and *Sustaining Dunbar* in East Lothian. However, only the latter two organisations were discussed in detail: *Playbusters*' CCF-funded project 'Grow Green with Glasgow's East End' (GGWGEE), and *Sustaining Dunbar*'s CCF-funded project 'Connecting Dunbar'. These two community organisations made for a strong contrast in social demographics, as *Playbusters* was situated in a deprived urban environment, while *Sustaining Dunbar* was situated in an affluent market town, and their project activities and underlying values differed markedly from each other. Data from *East*

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need to start gathering data in order to formulate ongoing plans and, perhaps, to discover the nature of the research questions ” (Heath & Cowley 2004:141-2).

**Kilbride Development Trust**, a project in a 'new town' near Glasgow, formed a minor case study, serving as a comparative element when exploring specific topics, in order to highlight similarities and differences.

<p><b>1. Playbusters, Glasgow (Parkhead)</b></p> <p>Playbusters was founded in 2002 as a charity, operating across Glasgow's East End. The organisation was governed by a board of directors and employed staff members who oversaw organisation-wide matters such as project management and volunteer co-ordination, and other staff members through several, sometimes overlapping projects enabled by different funding streams. Through its diverse projects, the organisation offered a variety of clubs and activities for children and adults, aimed at promoting assets and empowering volunteers.</p> <p>The aims of the CCF project 'Grow Green with Glasgow's East End' were the reduction of carbon emissions through training and awareness raising, as well as identifying and developing derelict land into community growing spaces and greenspaces. Activities included a swap shop, an educational 'Environment Group', energy efficiency advice and the development of the 'Grow Green Awards' of Glasgow's East End, which rewarded local projects (not necessarily connected to Playbusters) for innovation in reducing carbon emissions. The 'Grow Green with Glasgow's East End' project was run by three members of staff, with the help of volunteers.</p>	<p><b>2. Sustaining Dunbar, East Lothian (Dunbar)</b></p> <p>Sustaining Dunbar began in 2008 as a voluntary organization to employ the 'Transition Model' in Dunbar, East Lothian, and became professionalised after obtaining CCF-funding, through which it was able to expand its projects in consecutive rounds of funding. The core organisation formally or informally enabled or supported a range of local groups and social enterprises.</p> <p>The CCF-funded project 'Connecting Dunbar' was run by three part-time staff members and some sessional workers. The project involved offering services such as advice on energy saving and renewable technology, and undertook projects such as mapping and campaigning for sustainable transport, local food growing, area-specific sustainability-themed 'Neighbours Together' groups, work with schools mainly around worm composting and cycling, the 'Dr Bike' bicycle repair project, the promotion of a semi-independent car sharing group, and a community consultation on the erection of a community wind turbine. Sustaining Dunbar worked closely with East Lothian Council's Community Planning Partnership, assisting their efforts to work towards a 'Transition County'.</p>
<p><b>3. East Kilbride Development Trust, South Lanarkshire (East Kilbride) - minor case study</b></p> <p>East Kilbride Development Trust evolved from informal meetings towards a registered development trust initiative around the time of obtaining CCF-funding for the first time in 2010. The CCF-funded project 'Food Initiative (Seed Exchange and Organic Vegetable Growing Project)' was run entirely by volunteers; all grant money was spent on tools and equipment. The project mainly involved the establishment of a demonstration growing site used for seed saving, keeping bees for training purposes, running annual seed exchange events, building gardens in several schools around town and promoting vegetable growing skills to local college students.</p>	

### *Text Box 1: The Case Studies*

The urban project in Glasgow (**Playbusters**) was chosen because I was interested to see how notions of community played out in non-traditional settings. 'Community' is widely associated with rural places which are not densely populated (Taylor Aiken 2014). This association was perhaps reflected in the distribution of CCF-funding. When I began the fieldwork, CCF-funding for urban areas totalled 38% (see chapter 3 for a detailed breakdown), which was less than the 46% of the funding allocated to remote areas. Furthermore, even within the urban projects, there was an uneven distribution of CCF-funding. Up until March 2011, 38 out of 447 funded community projects were based in Glasgow, while 43 were based in Edinburgh, a smaller city than Glasgow. Furthermore, research on CCF-funded community projects was undertaken specifically within remote

community projects (Creamer 2014), and out of the urban areas, one study focused specifically on Edinburgh (Taylor Aiken 2014a), but no known academic research project of CCF-funded community projects focused on Glasgow, Scotland's biggest city, where CCF-funded projects were scarce compared to its capital city. Therefore I attempted to ensure that Glasgow, underrepresented in CCF-funding, was not neglected with regard to research around the CCF. I juxtaposed the urban project with a CCF-funded project in a small and relatively affluent town (*Sustaining Dunbar*), which gave some insights on the impact of social demographics and inequality on the shape of community projects.

### **1.3 'Road Map' to the Thesis**

The next few paragraphs outline a 'road map' to the thesis, which illustrates how the research approach, literature, findings and discussion are presented, while 'parking' the terms to be defined or spelled out in later chapters.

**CHAPTER 2** provides an overview of the relevant literature which informs all subsequent chapters. The chapter integrates multiple threats ranging from climate change via biodiversity loss to the overexploitation of non-renewable resources (see e.g. Rockström et al. 2009), which pose unprecedented challenges to the continued survival of life on earth as we know it. Emerging trends in multi-level sustainability governance are introduced, and the relevance of community in relation to this is described as being related to 'local commons' thinking, nested between individual and wider political agencies. I introduce the concept of liminality from the field of ritual studies, and apply it to community projects for sustainability. Rather than necessarily being indicative of wider transition processes towards a more sustainable society, community projects act as prefigurative agents in their own right. Insights from the systems thinking literature and notions of 'resilience' are informed by notions of asset-based approaches to community development, which has strengths and limitations. Literature on 'transition',

especially in the field of sustainability, elaborates on the notion of sustainability as a process, rather than (but not necessarily excluding) benchmarks and outcomes. I then progress to outline some cognitive foundations for 'learning sustainability', and connections to phenomenology.

**CHAPTER 3** describes the CCF, the grant programme that funded all case studies, in order to contextualise the community projects and their role in the wider political landscape. Exemplifying climate governance initiated by the Scottish Government, the CCF funded a wide array of community projects. I discuss whether the CCF was a result of and contributed to the rise of communities within centralised Scottish politics.

**CHAPTER 4** describes the methodology and methods used, crossing the boundaries of and synthesising different disciplines, and involving participatory research methods. A principal aim is to generate a more 'holistic' understanding of the role of community projects in the context of biospherical changes. I then describe the relevance of different kinds of knowledge within sustainable development (SD), in particular propositional and non-propositional knowledge. Finally, I describe the methods I used in the field. The main methods were participant observation and semi-structured interviewing, driven by a participatory ethos which involved my active participation in the projects.

**CHAPTER 5** examines how CCF-projects were organised and led. I explore empirical findings around the case studies' organisational structures, leadership roles and identities, and the role of volunteering. This is followed by a discussion of to what extent the project constitute examples of community-based sustainability governance.

**CHAPTER 6** narrates the practices and activities undertaken in the case studies, and the values underpinning these. The chapter analyses empirical findings from the case studies, exploring the interplay of practices and values around sustainability issues through the concept of projectsapes. Within these projectsapes, values of traditions and renewal are highlighted, which evoke nostalgic and future-oriented elements of sustainability thinking and practice.

**CHAPTER 7** explores the role of community projects within wider social structures, with reference to spatial and temporal elements in the case studies. The chapter highlights the relatively marginal nature of community projects for sustainability and climate change, the temporal restrictions underpinning group activities, and the precariousness of the community organisations' dependence on grant funding. The concept of liminality serves to explore marginality, collective learning and pioneering characteristics within the case studies, in relation to the wider unsustainable society they are part of.

**CHAPTER 8** discusses the implications of the findings and suggests potential pathways for researchers and policy makers to facilitate better, wider integration processes of the learning around sustainable practices that emerged in community projects. These potential pathways include prioritising sustainability principles and solutions in policies and the economy, increasing asset transfers to communities to enable 'commons governance', embedding sustainability education into education institutions, and involving community groups in the design of research projects concerning them.

This chapter has introduced the rationale and prologues of the thesis, the case studies, and the structure of chapters. A range of terms and concepts were introduced, which require careful definition and unpacking. The next chapter provides a literature review, which serves to unpack and define some of these terms, and introduce the main themes which frame and inform the thesis.

## **CHAPTER TWO - Sustainability Governance and Learning: the Relevance of Community and the Commons in a Biospheric Emergency**

### **2.0 Introduction**

*"Simply doing 'better' environmentally will not stop the unraveling of ecological relationships we depend on for food and health. Improving our act will not stabilize the atmosphere. It will not slow the falling of aquifers or the rising of oceans. Nor will it return Arctic ice... to its pre-industrial extent. In order to alter these trends, vastly larger changes are needed than we have seen so far. It is essential that we take stock, soberly and in scientifically measurable ways, of where we are headed. We desperately need—and are running out of time—to learn how to shift direction toward safety for ourselves, our descendants, and the other species that are our only known companions in the universe." (Engelman 2013:5)*

The first and main purpose of this chapter is to support and guide later chapters by introducing relevant literature from the disciplines of social anthropology, human geography and social psychology, and fields such as SD, and human ecology, as well as literature which does not fit into any of these categories. Rather than focusing on analysing specific bodies of literature to establish the case for this research on the basis of existing gaps in the literature, this thesis rests primarily on empirical data (chapters 5, 6 and 7), critically framed by an analysis of literature around the relevant themes that emerged from the data. This approach is also adopted because CCF-funded community projects have rarely been studied as a subject of its own. While specific aspects of urban (see Taylor Aiken 2014) and rural (see Creamer 2014) CCF-funded community projects have been studied, as well as community benefits of CCF-funded community projects

(see Bolger & Allan 2013), this thesis examines the role of community projects within Scottish society, and specifically as part of a necessary transition to a more sustainable society. This chapter serves to show how these case studies fit into the wider discourse and literature that examines sustainability and community flourishing. It does so by organising these discourses and literature bodies into the relevant themes that frame the empirical analysis of the case studies in the later chapters.

The second purpose of this chapter is to introduce the concept of communities as *loci* for sustainable practices, that sits at the heart of this thesis. Parts of the literature on community groups as political agents tend to reflect 'bright green' views on community groups as powerful building blocks of a more sustainable society (see e.g. Barton 2000, Dawson 2006, Hopkins 2008). On the other hand, political analysts have described community groups as a political tool within a neoliberal agenda (see Corbett & Walker 2013). Other scholars in the field of sustainability tend to focus on behaviour change effected by community groups while acknowledging their limitations (see e.g. Heiskanen et al. 2010, Moloney et al. 2010).

The approach to literature adopted in this chapter is generalist in nature, synthesising fields such as climate science, governance in politics, cognition and phenomenology, in order to generate new insights about the roles and limitations of community projects. Generalism has strong historic roots in the Scottish academic tradition, going back to Thomson's and Geddes' endeavour to investigate "Life's fundamental categories; ... and these not merely as separately investigated, but in their varied harmonies, throughout that perpetual interaction which is the essential [sic] of Life at all its levels of being and becoming" (1863:v). While my analysis is predominantly rooted in the social sciences, Geddes' approach served as an inspiration for my aim to integrate the main topic, community projects for sustainability, into wider complex fields.

The structure of this chapter allows for a scoping of the relevant literature for each theme explored subsequently in the data analysis. In doing so, I had to compromise on some depth to allow for more breadth, which allows me to move from large systems (the biosphere) to specific aspects of sustainability, learning and the role of



communities. In order to achieve this task, the following sections are elaborated.

Section 2.1 sets the scene for the need to explore community contributions to shifting governance practices towards increased sustainability, or future-oriented planning rooted in issues of justice. It does so by exploring implications of an unravelling biosphere on efforts to establish more sustainable practices.

Section 2.2 gives an overview of geographic variations in sustainability governance, which provides the framing for discussing the rise of communities in Scotland and the role the CCF plays in Scottish politics (chapter 4).

Section 2.3 discusses resilience, transitions and – crucially – liminality with respect to communities, which sets the scene for discussing community-level governance (chapter 5).

Finally, in section 2.4, literature on a phenomenology for 'learning sustainability' sets the scene for discussing 'projectscapes' in form of techniques and values for sustainability practices (chapter 6). In the discussion section (2.5), I begin to outline the role of community projects in a 'long emergency' by introducing the concept of 'local commons', nested between global and national politics on the one hand and individualistic responses on the other hand, and the importance of thinking in collectives for the implementation of sustainable practices.

## **2.1 Climate Change and Our Unravelling Biosphere**

A prominent topic within SD is climate change, which has driven the CCF and, by extension, the community projects that make up the case studies in this thesis. The premise on which local community projects for sustainability build their activities is ultimately rooted in global crises, not necessarily restricted to climate change. Interdisciplinary evidence suggests that humans are changing the entire biosphere

(Rockström et al. 2009; Parsson 2012; Barnosky et al. 2014). However, climate change is a game changer within the interlinked global crises, given that the International Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) has warned that climate change threatens to irreversibly spiral out of control and affect ecosystems worldwide (IPCC 2014). Therefore, while other aspects of biosphere deterioration also need to be counteracted, this section focuses on insufficient global action on climate change.

Climate change has been predicted to “significantly affect the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, as well as key issues like poverty and equity” (Munasinghe 2001). Warming processes of the climate system, including the atmosphere and ocean, diminishing amounts of ice and snow, rising sea levels, and higher concentrations of greenhouse gases<sup>2</sup> (GHG) are “unequivocal” (IPCC 2013:4). Anthropogenic climate change, or human influence on the climate system, is “clear” (IPCC 2013:15), leading to the conclusion that “it is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century” (IPCC 2013:17). Stabilising GHG levels would involve aligning anthropogenic GHG emissions with the planetary capacity to remove these from the atmosphere, as Stern (2006) observed.

"Stabilisation – at whatever level – requires that annual emissions be brought down to the level that balances the Earth’s natural capacity to remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere." (Stern 2006:194)

The stabilisation of GHG emissions requires global co-operation across public and private institutions who have the leverage to introduce changes to polluting infrastructures. The goal of climate change mitigation and adaptation is stated by the United Nations and quoted by the IPCC as follows:

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2 Greenhouse gases are either naturally released or generated by human activities, and are increasing in the atmosphere due to human activities. In particular, long-lived gases such as carbon dioxide are changing the Earth's climate (IPCC 2007). Except when referring to KSB's data, which uses carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) as a unit, in this thesis I generally refer to carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e), “a term for describing different greenhouse gases in a common unit” (Brander 2012). Reducing all greenhouse gases to a measurable variable is helpful when thinking about community projects' efforts to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

“to achieve ... stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.” (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in IPCC 2007:99)

The international consensus in climate science requires global warming to remain below a 2°C target above pre-industrial levels (Wei et al. 2012). The 2°C target is based on the predictions of the IPCC, who estimate the probabilities for uncontrollable feedback mechanisms leading to further warming occurring beyond this point, with severe consequences for the planet's carrying capacity (IPCC 2013).

However, there appears to be a mismatch between ideal pathways towards reaching the target and actual pathways manifest in current political plans and actions. The success of negotiations towards international treaties is said to have declined from the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 to the Copenhagen Accord in 2009 (Lau et al. 2012:5280). International negotiations to tackle climate change have, so far, failed to achieve a robust international agreement to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>e (Smead et al. 2014). By the time of the international climate negotiations in Durban in 2011, “world leaders were noting 'with grave concern' the 'significant gap' between current pledges and emission pathways consistent with the target” (Jordan et al. 2013:752).

Climate change mitigation targets by country have a limited effect on the global atmosphere, given that there has been no breakthrough in UN negotiations about how to achieve the mitigation targets (Geden 2010). In 2007, the IPCC recommended action at both international and national levels (IPCC 2007:vii). In 2013, the IPCC put explicit emphasis on the need for global collaboration:

“Effective mitigation will not be achieved if individual agents advance their own interests independently. Climate change has the characteristics of a collective

action problem at the global scale, because most greenhouse gases ... accumulate over time and mix globally, and emissions by any agent (e.g., individual, community, company, country) affect other agents.” (IPCC 2013:4)

The state of international climate change negotiations has been compared to the 'prisoner's dilemma' (Soroos 1994), according to which “it is in the interests of each party that the others reduce emissions, rather than themselves (in order to) to gain the benefits of others’ actions without bearing the costs” (Helm 2008:234). Ostrom (1990) revisits the prisoner's dilemma as a subsidiary of Hardin's (1968) 'tragedy of the commons', according to which humans, seeking their individual short-term gain, inevitably over-exploit a resource which is common rather than private (in his example, a pasture). Like the 'tragedy of the commons', the prisoner's dilemma leads to the “paradox that individually rational strategies lead to collectively irrational outcomes (which) seems to challenge a fundamental faith that rational human beings can achieve rational results” (Ostrom 1990:5). An intensification of international efforts would be required to counteract the possibility of political and economic institutions free-riding on the efforts of others instead of contributing to a joint effort (Ostrom 1990:6) to effectively mitigate and prevent runaway climate change. However, efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change are required on all scales – international, national, regional and individual (Walker 2011).

At the time of writing, it seems that large, systemic changes are not being implemented on the scale necessary to bring about the CO<sub>2</sub>e reductions the IPCC deems necessary to prevent runaway climate change - indeed a 'tragedy of the commons of regimes' (Kenrick 2009). In other words, regimes that allow unlimited access to limited resources trigger over-exploitation (of non-renewable resources) and pollution such as amounts of GHG released into the atmosphere. Climate change is a 'wicked problem': a complex issue which is characterised such that any solutions are likely to generate new problems (Brown et al. 2010:4; Rittel & Webber 1973). A solution for a wicked problem will,

after its implementation, “generate waves of consequences over an extended -virtually an unbounded- period of time” (Rittel & Webber 1973:173). One example of the complexity of climate change mitigation is the social dimension to scientific targets. Despite the need to drastically reduce the use of fossil fuels to stabilise the ecosphere and its long-term capacity to sustain complex life-forms, the aspirational lure or normalisation of lifestyles that depend on a fossil-fuel-intensive systems constitute a 'wicked' social barrier.

In *Sustainable Development of the Biosphere*, Clark et al. (1986) name complex, large-scale “syndromes of interdependence” (5) between the world economy and the world environment. Climate change is part of a cluster of interconnected problems symptomatic of environmental deterioration to an extent where the Earth's life support systems are threatened beyond repair. Barnosky et al. (2014) argue that Earth is fast approaching a tipping point, where climate disruption, extinction, wholesale loss of diverse ecosystems, pollution, and human population growth and consumption patterns cause irretrievable damage to the biosphere. Some argue that we have entered the geological era of the Anthropocene (Steffen 2011; Palsson et al. 2012). The Anthropocene theory is not yet fully scientifically accepted as a new geological era in the Earth's history, but proponents of the theory lean on the premises that human activities are causing climate change, are significantly altering several other biogeochemical or element cycles that are fundamental to life on the Earth, are strongly modifying the terrestrial water cycle, and are likely driving the sixth major extinction event in Earth history (Steffen et al. 2011). Constructing a systemic view on how human activities are irretrievably altering the biosphere, Palsson (2013) compared the Earth to a household, calling forth a human duty of stringent “housekeeping” of the household of life (11).

In summary, the global scale of the human-caused challenge to the biosphere requires global, co-ordinated systemic change on international, national and local levels to meet these challenges to prevent irreversible ecocide<sup>3</sup> on a scale which threatens to unravel

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3 While the term 'ecocide' has first been recorded in 1970, it was popularised by the lawyer Polly Higgins, who proposed the following amendment to the Rome Statute in 2010 to make ecocide a crime against peace: “Ecocide is the extensive damage to, destruction of or loss of ecosystem(s) of a given territory, whether by human agency or by other causes, to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the inhabitants

the complex 'webs of life'. The following section outlines SD and governance processes which provide a starting point to addressing the global systemic crises through a lens of geopolitics.

## **2.2 Sustainable Development in a Context of Geopolitics and Changing Governance Processes**

In order to contextualise the present study, it needs to 'belong' to a location, and this section establishes its regional significance within the geopolitical positioning of Scotland. One case in which responsibilities to tackle global crises are differently weighted across different nations or regions is the mitigation of climate change (see section 3.1 for a discussion of Scotland's responsibilities). The international climate policy debate points towards common but differentiated responsibilities (see e.g. Carzola & Toman 2000; IPCC 2013) regarding different countries' historical contributions to the rising emissions and to a related differentiated responsibility to lower CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. This section outlines some of these differences in relation to SD governance.

The most accepted and cited definition of SD is the Brundtland Commission's definition “to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987:16). A number of subprinciples which were endorsed by the Rio Declaration of 1992 are more specific. These subprinciples suggest “improving intergenerational and intragenerational equity; alleviating chronic poverty; encouraging public participation in decision making; observing important environmental limits to growth; and integrating an environmental dimension into all sectoral policy making” (Jordan 2008:20). The Brundtland definition's “vaguely descriptive terms like ‘needs’, ‘future’ and ‘compromising’” are

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of that territory has been severely diminished.” (Higgins et al. 2013:257)

subject to interpretation (Opstal & Hugé 2012:688), and therefore require careful definition and adaptation to different contexts. The Brundtland definition is likely to be deliberately vague in order to "maximize consensus rather than clarity" (Sachs 2015:76), which has led to many definitions of SD with many and diverse associated interests and visions, making SD a contested area (Sachs 2015:77).

Given the multi-faceted approaches to SD, is there a way to 'achieve SD'? 'Achieving sustainability' is best thought of as a negative goal: there is no final target, but there tend to be parameters -the exceeding of ecological limits- which indicate failure. Definitions of SD range from 'weak' SD, arguing for more piece-meal reforms (Baker 2006) to 'strong' SD. 'Weak SD' has been argued to challenge a current dominant social paradigm of growth-based economics, while 'strong SD' implies "a 'new paradigm' based upon sustainable or steady-state economics which is rooted in deep ecological thought" (Chatterton 2002:552). The differing emphases on human capital ('weak SD') and natural capital ('strong SD') are of particular importance for differentiating the concepts.

"On one side, advocates of weak sustainability emphasize the necessity of maintaining the stock of total capital, man-made and natural ... . On the other side, advocates of strong sustainability emphasize the necessity of maintaining the stock of natural capital rather than total capital as a prerequisite of sustainable development." (Hediger 2004:2)

Based on the global trends outlined in the previous section, and to avoid SD being reducible to "conservation of development" (Sachs 2015:81), it appears that 'weak' definitions of SD are not strong enough to advocate measures which avoid (or reverse) the exceeding of ecological limits in order to prevent irreversible damage to the biosphere. For example, according to a 'weak' notion of SD which Sachs (2015) termed the 'contest perspective', climate protection may be considered less optimal than future adjustment to adverse climate effects, in short-term financial terms (2015:82). Given the scale of the threats to the global biosphere which supports human and other lives,

'strong' SD is the only meaningful definition of SD which places development aspirations firmly within ecological limits, and therefore 'strong SD' is the definition I refer to when I use the term. The notion of 'strong SD' is consistent with Sachs' (2015) 'home perspective' of SD, which emphasises an 'orderly retreat' by those who over-exploit natural resources, efficiency and sufficiency, and new models of prosperity.

Rather than assuming scientific neutrality, SD is concerned with orientation and guiding principles for the future (Amelung et al. 2008:9) and takes a problem-solving approach. As an academic field<sup>4</sup>, SD may therefore best be characterised as looking beyond theory and always keeping an eye on practice that is embedded in social, economic and ecological processes. A novel development in the sustainability literature is the emerging field of sustainability science, taking the stance that scientific efforts are to promote the goals of a sustainability transition, in which human needs are met while preserving the life support systems of the Earth (Kates et al. 2001). Sustainability science places an emphasis on both systemic approaches to analysing socioeconomic-ecological problems, and on finding solutions to particular problems as part of a wider aim to point out ways towards sustainable societies (Bebbington & Larrinaga 2014). However, in order to emphasise the geopolitical dimension of SD, hence I refer to my own positioning as embracing 'critical SD', which is introduced in section 4.2.

Even where SD challenges the growth-centred hegemony which notions of 'development' tend to carry and introduces notions of limits to growth, SD remains part of a Western scientific hegemony which historically tended to disrespect indigenous knowledge - or more specifically, the importance of indigenous knowledge in SD has not been privileged in the global debate on SD (Breidlid 2009). Attempts are being made to overcome the influences of cultural hegemony in SD; the co-production of knowledge is a crucial part of challenging dominant worldviews (Opstal & Hugé 2012) in the interpretation of concepts crucially linked to SD. Nevertheless, in its aim to identify alternatives to economic development, SD is suspected to be an "oxymoron" (Sachs 2015:86), because 'development' has been associated with expansionism and the marginalisation of large parts of the world population (Sachs 2015:86).

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4 While there cannot be a clear division between SD as an academic field, and SD as a set of practices for change, here I describe SD primarily as a set of practices. SD's academic characterisations are discussed in section 4.2.



Tackling climate change is an example within SD which illustrates the significance of geopolitics, defined as addressing the 'big picture' and offering “a way of relating local and regional dynamics to the global system as a whole” (Ó Tuathail 1998:1). There is an interconnection between a geopolitical and systemic approach to SD and Swyngedouw's (2004) notion of 'glocalisation' to describe the intrinsic interconnection of the 'local' and the 'global'.

“‘Glocalisation’ refers to the twin process whereby, firstly, institutional/regulatory arrangements shift from the national scale both upwards to supra-national or global scales and downwards to the scale of the individual body or to local, urban or regional configurations and, secondly, economic activities and inter-firm networks are becoming simultaneously more localised/regionalised and transnational.” (Swyngedouw 2004:27)

Geopolitical factors play a role in SD in relation to locally appropriate problem-solving, which cannot be seen in isolation from global inequalities and aforementioned common, but differentiated responsibilities. Countries with the highest gross domestic product (GDP) are estimated to have contributed 60-80% of emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>e (Wei et al. 2012). I choose to use the term 'minority world' to refer to these countries with relatively high GDPs which have been traditionally deemed to be 'developed' or belonging to the 'Global North'. This is in order to contrast them with the 'majority world', which has come to mean its binary opposite.

“[The term 'Majority World Movements'] was coined by Bangladeshi photojournalist and scholar Shahidul Alam. In the early 1990s, Alam began to advocate for a new expression, to, in his words, challenge the 'West's rhetoric of democracy' [whereas in earlier decades,] internationally, countries were categorized as Third World, Developing World, or as Least Developed Countries. However, as Alam points out, 'the expressions have strong negative connotations that reinforce the stereotypes about poor communities and represent them as icons of poverty.' Thus, the term 'majority world' seeks to define 'the community in

terms of what it has, rather than what it lacks.' The term necessarily includes the cultural, intellectual, and social 'wealth' of these communities.” (Leong 2008:vii-viii)

It should be noted, however, that all such binaries are inadequate, as they do not portray the many countries in-between, nor disparities within 'rich' and 'poor' countries, nor do they convey a more nuanced picture of economic activities which go beyond mere monetary activity.

The common but differentiated responsibilities (see e.g. Carzola & Toman 2000; IPCC 2013) emerging within SD can also be conceptualised through the lens of environmental justice. Environmental justice has been defined as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies" (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2014). Environmental justice is characterised by a plurality of definitions which arise from the applied nature of the concept. Beyond its scholarly usage, environmental justice is a key demand of some grassroots movements and activists, often in response to environmental injustices or the disproportionate effects of by-products of unsustainable development on disadvantaged communities (Hartley 2003:478). Environmental justice movements seek to redress such disproportionate effects, and promote principles of fairness and justice in the access to natural resources, and in seeking protection from adverse effects which result from anthropogenic environmental degradation, waste and pollution which affects their communities.

"Environmental justice movements explore, represent, and demand justice - fair distribution, recognition, capabilities, and functioning - for communities as well as individuals. These movements are most often broad, plural, and inclusive; likewise, their definitions and discourses of justice range from those based on individual distributive complaints to those based on the survival of community functioning." (Schlosberg 2007:3)

In this thesis, I have not used environmental justice as a guiding concept through which to assess CCF-funded projects, largely because justice has not emerged in the findings as a primary motivator of project leaders and participants. However, it should be noted that the CCF's funding criteria, which require of communities to mitigate climate change, could be framed as an environmental injustice in the light of existing inequalities, which render more affluent communities better equipped to take a long-term view and work towards SD targets. The impact of inequalities and poverty is further discussed in chapter 3, as well as in the empirical chapters 5, 6 and 7 in relation to the findings.

Scotland is part of the minority world, and belongs to several geopolitical communities: the North Atlantic region, Europe and the United Kingdom. It is part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, the European Union, and the northernmost country of the United Kingdom, "a nation within a nation" (Warren 2009:3). Scotland's geopolitical positioning carries with it the 'minority world' responsibilities. *Per capita* consumption within the minority world requires a "dramatic reduction in demands on the planet's resources and environmental services [and] radical change in social, economic, political and cultural systems" (Trainer 2010:4113). In the minority world, global depletion of multiple natural resources (Heinberg 2007) require the challenging of current production and consumption patterns based on the learning and maintenance of converging conventions, which are reinforced by a vast commercial system of technologies, marketing and media - conventions of 'comfort, cleanliness and convenience' (Shove 2003). To describe differences in wealth and scarcity in terms of dualistic models helps to simplify an almost indescribable complexity. However, the inadequacy of binary models arises because there are multiple ways (economic, psychological, social, ecological) to conceptualise what 'wealth' and 'poverty' refer to. Material wants can be satisfied "either by producing much or desiring little" (Sahlins 1974:2), especially in a state of (ecological) abundance, which tends to have been diminished in so-called 'wealthy' societies. Nonetheless, the prospects of a transition away from fossil fuels are made difficult by the fact that globally, there are inequalities of access to resources that ensure flourishing livelihoods. Significant inequities - both within communities and between nations - may undermine the social cohesion that

enables an implementation of sustainability measures (Munasinghe 2001), and hence striving towards equality is an integral part of SD.

In relation to tackling climate change, further and beyond the moral case for mitigation in the 'minority world', there are economic incentives for early emissions mitigation. A comparison of three climate-energy-economic models suggests that regions with above average emissions, such as the EU, incur lower mitigation costs by taking early action (Jakob et al. 2011; Stern 2006:vi). Taken together, this explains and supports the case for actions that reduce emissions. Challenges faced by climate scientists, and by public and private institutions who face responsibilities to take action, are the high levels of uncertainty around the estimations of required GHG reduction levels, and the rapid changes in the Earth's climatic system, which require constant readjustment of GHG emission targets. For example, uncertainty around the required GHG emissions reduction to stabilise the atmosphere was reflected in the suggestion that "global emissions will have to be between 25% and 75% lower than current levels by 2050" (Stern 2006:300). The difference between GHG emissions reduction of 25% and 75% is significant, and the impacts on economies and energy infrastructures would differ, depending on whether the higher or lower estimates are implemented. Furthermore, as climate change is unfolding, the required GHG estimates change. In 2006, Stern "pointed to a 75% chance that global temperatures would rise by between two and three degrees above the long-term average; he now believes we are 'on track for something like four'" (Stewart & Elliott 2013). The increasing urgency to mitigate climate change further add to the 'wickedness' of the problem; public and private institutions are under increasing pressure to take swift and decisive actions.

Given the rapid deterioration of the Earth's climatic system, another cluster of literature relevant to SD deals with local adaptation and conservation measures. In the 'majority world', efforts focus on adaptation scenarios and on non-climate change specific aspects such as community participation in conservation efforts (Leisher et al. 2011). Mitigating climate change in the minority world involves instruments to foster behaviour change to more environmentally friendly practices, such as regulations and incentives, education and awareness raising, community management of environmental

resources, and reference to moral, religious or ethical principles (Gardner & Stern 1996). The first two of these are more prevalent in European societies, and, in the case of energy consumption, have had little success (Heiskanen et al. 2010). Whitmarsh et al. (2010) argue that contextual barriers lead to limited 'carbon capabilities' amongst the United Kingdom public - encompassing decision-making, practices, and structural engagement towards low carbon lifestyles. There has been a tendency for government structures to prioritise mitigation rather than adaptation, articulated as 'mitigation bias' (Measham et al. 2011:897). A focus on adaptation has been critiqued with the view that it might “stem from the tendency to depict threats and risks as negative, fixed and immutable” (Ganesh & Zoller 2013). However, it is critical to support adaptation action at the community level because this is the scale at which climate change is experienced by most people (Dumaru 2010:751) - at least globally. Dumaru defines Community-based Adaptation (CBA) as “a method of undertaking adaptation in local communities, which emphasizes indigenous resources and institutions and the empowerment of the most vulnerable groups” (2010:753). This empowerment is one consequence of the strong participatory element often found in adaptation programmes. Participation in the management of and decision making processes surrounding social-ecological systems enhances learning and thereby their adaptive capacity (Reed et al. 2010). CBA focuses on adapting to potential disasters in the long term, in contrast to other short-term adaptation measures (Dumaru 2010:754).

Located in a North-Western European country, where the impacts of climate change have been felt to a limited extent to date, the CCF presents a case of 'mitigation bias' where community organisations are asked to contribute to the national effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, in later chapters I argue that based on the case study findings, in their engagement with climate change, community projects tended to focus neither explicitly on adaptation nor on mitigation. This is in line with the analysis that, beyond adaptation and mitigation, climate change action is constituted by “a range of discourses and meaning-making processes” (Russell et al. 2013:2).

The concept of 'resilience' is linked to adaptation, but is not limited to it. The resilience of natural systems and the resilience of social systems are interconnected in ecological crises in what Gunderson (2003) calls an 'adaptive dance'. The main message emerging from this body of literature is the interconnectedness of social and ecological systems which “behave in nonlinear ways, exhibit marked thresholds in their dynamics, and that social-ecological systems act as strongly coupled, complex and evolving integrated systems” (Folke et al. 2002:437). Definitions of resilience tally well with that of adaptation by the IPCC as changes made or actions taken to reduce the vulnerability of a system to current or future climate change (Adger et al. 2007). An interconnected view of social and ecological systems alludes to humanity's dependence on ecosystems which are vulnerable to unexpected events. Human overexploitation of natural resources may therefore increase such vulnerability and can thus trigger a loss of ecological resilience in ecosystems (Gunderson 2003:33).

“More resilient social-ecological systems are able to absorb larger shocks without changing in fundamental ways. When massive transformation is inevitable, resilient systems contain the components needed for renewal and reorganization. In other words, they can cope, adapt, or reorganize without sacrificing the provision of ecosystem services. Resilience is often associated with diversity—of species, of human opportunity, and of economic options—that maintains and encourages both adaptation and learning.” (Folke et al. 2002:438)

Rooted in the discipline of ecology, Gunderson's (2003) and Folke et al.'s (2002) notions of resilience allude to a materialist<sup>5</sup> view of the world, whereas, for example, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (discussed in 2.6) includes values and cultural symbols. Literature which deals more explicitly with community resilience includes mental and cultural phenomena by advocating a notion of resilience which broadly accommodates adaptability to change; ability to withstand external shocks;

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5 Materialism is defined as “The theory or belief that nothing exists except matter and its movements and modifications; (more narrowly) the theory or belief that mental phenomena are nothing more than, or are wholly caused by, the operation of material or physical agencies.” (OED 2014). While Gunderson (2003) does not explicitly rule out non-materialist views of social and ecological systems, his notion of resilience (and, equally, that of Folke et al. 2002) is not concerned with concepts outside the realm of matter which are more commonly ascribed to the human mind and human cultures.

protection against vulnerability; and active participation by community members (Wilding 2011). These themes are explored in section 2.2.

Taking geopolitical factors into account, how might SD be implemented? In the most basic sense, for any transition from less sustainable practices towards more sustainable practices to occur, changes have to be implemented and overseen - or governed. There is a close affinity between SD and governance, because SD encompasses environmental, economic and social issues across individual policy sectors and organisational boundaries, with new modes of decision-making and governance emerging from these (see e.g. Joss 2010:408; Benson et al. 2013; Jordan 2008). On the other hand, the crises faced by global ecosystems due to unsustainable development are blamed “on flawed political contexts, on ineffective regulatory mechanisms, on the inappropriate scales at which policy is made and on the unaccountability of existing mechanisms for policy making” (Griffin 2010:365). Shifting modes of governance away from unsustainable development, and finding ways of working towards regulation, accountability and multiple-scale governance, appear to be crucial elements of implementing SD.

What exactly is meant by 'governance' in SD? Governance, a concept which is perhaps as contested as SD (Jordan 2008), is largely a question of agency. This is in contrast to government, with connotations “of a legally based, centralised, sovereign state authority, formally elected and possessing constitutional powers, [governance is associated with] more informally based, decentralised, shared, collective and inclusive decision-making structures” (Gray in Griffin 2010:365). SD agents include political institutions, including national governments, as well as a range of institutions which might not be able to implement legally binding policy frameworks, but who are nevertheless influential agents in their own right – institutions such as local governments, media, corporations or NGOs (Rogall 2008:193), but also more informal associations such as community groups. Joss describes sustainability governance as follows:

“Governance for sustainability typically takes place in a differentiated (or fragmentary) polity with policy- and decision-making occurring, web-like, across

various types and levels of organizations and institutions often lacking in any meaningful integrated treatment (including definition, planning, implementation and scrutiny) of the issues at stake.” (Joss 2010:419)

Normative assumptions about governance in SD include the 'rule' that governance should occur at the most appropriate scale (Benson et al. 2013:1700). However, given the 'glocality' of the issues raised in SD, governance requires collaboration between multiple stakeholders (Benson et al. 2012) and refers to processes or patterns which aim to co-ordinate SD principles where they stand in conflict with each other (Jordan 2008:20). The notion of SD governance constituting a smooth, co-ordinated process is utopian, however. The concept of SD governance is 'messy' (Jordan 2008) largely because the underlying issues and the scale of the crises are 'messy'. In its most basic sense, sustainability governance consists of attempts to knit back together the unravelling threads of our social and ecological systems, whereby the building of a community garden is as valid a governance process on a small scale as a policy to reduce carbon emissions is a valid governance process on a large scale.

Some analysts assert that a trend towards decentralisation – implied by governance beyond Governments – points towards “an ongoing neoliberalisation or fragmentation of centralised environmental governance” (Benson et al. 2013:1708). This assertion is mirrored in the equally conflicted analysis of community projects exemplifying 'political localisation' and at the same time being instrumental to processes that lead to the dismantling of the welfare state (see section 2.3). However, whether or not decentralised governance is a symptom of neoliberalisation depends on the wider political context. Governance agents are embedded within hierarchies, markets, and networks (Jordan 2008:19), both established and new. While governance structures have been opened up to be more inclusive, governance processes are shaped by pre-existing power structures which might limit the ability of actors to engage effectively in the promotion of SD (Baker 2006:77) and determine whom these governance processes ultimately serve (Jordan 2008:30). Furthermore, multi-level (or multi-stakeholder) governance in SD would require co-ordinated action at all levels - local, regional, national and global - in order to be effective. In cases where decentralisation goes hand



in hand with neoliberalisation, the national and global levels are neglected, which makes for poor practice in governance.

“There is a critical role for government at the national, state and local level to coordinate and better integrate current approaches to both the technical and social transitions needed to address the climate change. It is not enough to just expect people to ‘just try harder’ through taking ‘small steps’, without addressing the systemic nature of both environmental problems and daily practices.” (Moloney et al. 2010: 7622)

In summary, the complexity of SD governance arises from 1) the underlying governance structures and processes, 2) the nature of the issues involved, and 3) the modes of accountability at work (Joss et al. 2010:418). Collaborative relationships are best seen as “processes of negotiation, consensus building, and problem solving in the pursuit of common agreed goals” (Benson et al. 2013:1700). Within this study, the CCF presents a particular case of government-enabled, carbon-reducing governance at a community level. By providing grant funding, the Scottish Government has enabled community projects to emerge or expand; in turn, by accepting grant funding, community organisations become accountable to fulfilling the Scottish Government's criteria.

Following on from observations about sustainability governance, section 2.3 describes what Jones & Ormston (2014) call a “localism agenda” within the United Kingdom, with a focus on communities as governing agents.

## **2.3 'Community' Defined and Located Within Discourses of Sustainability**

This section is concerned with expanding on key concepts underlying this thesis - in particular, the concept of 'community' that lies at the core of the conceptualisation of the CCF. Analysts of globalisation have established a “rediscovery of the local” (Jasanoff &

Martello in Jordan 2008:28). The scale of community action is greater than that of the individual or household, potentially enabling consideration of human activities within meaningful bio-regions. At the same time, the community scale is sufficiently small enough to enable face-to-face interactions, human networking and solutions tailored to particular localities. Community-based climate action can constitute a range of meaning-making processes (Russell et al. 2013) which open up liminal spaces of 'learning sustainability practices', as is suggested in later chapters. For example, community projects for sustainability manifest what Griffin calls “newly significant political spaces” (Griffin 2010: 366), and can play a role in multi-level governance, as established in the last section.

Why does community matter? Some analysts have noted that individualisation was "the trademark of (at least European) modernity" (Bauman 2001:22), and it might be argued that notions of community somewhat counteract this individualisation. In 1887 Tönnies contrasted *Gesellschaft* (society) with *Gemeinschaft* (community); more recently the term 'community' has gained more of a “polemic edge” where the term is used in a favourable and “warmly persuasive” way to describe an existing or alternative set of relationships (Williams 1976:76).

“'Community' stands for the kind of world which is not, regrettably, available to us - but which we would dearly wish to inhabit and which we hope to repossess.”  
(Bauman 2001:3)

'Community' is a contested concept (Banks 2003:13), slippery and sometimes utopian, with a long heritage in the social sciences (Taylor Aiken 2014). The term 'community' provokes associations of “a deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 2006:7), but the term has had a range of meanings throughout history, from 'common people' (as opposed to people of rank), the people of a district or the “quality of holding something in common”, among others (Williams 1976:75). Three senses of the term 'community' have been described as: 1) descriptive communities, referring to shared locations, interests or identities, 2) community as value, referring to positive connotations associated with the term, and 3) active community, which refers to collective action or

participation (Banks 2003:14). In the literature, conceptualisations of communities used to be biased towards small-scale or territorial settlements, perhaps rooted in a tendency to identify the “local, small, territorial unit” with communal relationships and the “large urban and regional unit” with societal characteristics (Gusfield 1975:32-3). A common meaning of the term appears to be linked to local neighbourhoods (see e.g. Barton 2000), which has been influential in how the term has been widely used in policy and literature (Taylor Aiken 2014).

There are several limitations with the use of the term 'community' in policy and development initiatives. The first of these limitations is of a social nature, because 'community' appears to be a unit which is easily identifiable. Where community-driven action is advocated by policy makers, communities are presupposed to be largely homogeneous, thereby failing to identify multiple nuances of voices within them. The roots of these tendencies of “accidental exclusion” (Guijt & Shah 1998:7) may have developed well over a century ago. Then, “the idea of a culturally and politically homogeneous, participatory local social system gained acceptability and currency” (Guijt & Shah 1998:7), with the implicit invitation to overlook tendencies of inequality and oppression in favour of generating enthusiasm for a cooperative and harmonious ideal. The second limitation, concerning place, arises with the practical problems of attempting to describe the boundaries of a community, considering high levels of social mobility which make up for dynamic community boundaries and composition (Guijt & Shah 1998:8). A “place” is a synonym for a region or area to which has been attributed a “place identity” (Huigen & Meijering 2005:21), which is closely related to a 'sense of community' or 'community spirit', which involve conceiving of community in a hermeneutical sense.

“Community is hermeneutical. It is a concept used to describe things in the world by those who are concerned with social relations connecting people and the problems of understanding and interpreting these. Though there is obviously nothing inherently wrong with this function, the practice of hermeneutics is always potentially problematical because it is burdened by a romantic sensibility, which evokes feelings of nostalgia and closeness.” (Blackshaw 2010:1)

'Sense of community' can also be defined through the categories of membership, influence, integration and fulfilment of needs and shared emotional connection as “a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (McMillan & Chavis 1986:9). This definition relies mainly on case studies of ethnically, religiously or politically motivated communities, and the authors warn that “as the force of sense of community drives people closer together, it also seems to be polarizing and separating subgroups of people” (McMillan & Chavis 1986:20). Hence a 'sense of community' defines community in a way in which it is no panacea, but a “tool for fostering understanding and cooperation” (McMillan & Chavis 1986:20). The authors thus derive 'an ought from an is' in the sense that a sense of community is defined around belonging and group identities, but then proceed to state that it should be also laden with inclusive values, which muddies the original definition. This is also apparent in Barton's notion of 'community spirit', which assumes that even though the notion has generally positive connotations, it remains elusive and hard to define.

“Community spirit is rather like a sense of humour. It is generally seen as desirable, its absence is lamented and yet it evades attempts to analyse its existence or function.” (Barton 2000:152)

However, the notions of a 'sense of community' and 'community spirit' are still important in that they combine group identity with values and emotions, and thus partially free 'community' from its geographical connotations. McMillan and Chavis (1986) state furthermore that “a sense of community could develop, especially if appropriate technical assistance were provided to assist in organizing” (19-20). A potentially evolving sense of community is especially relevant to community groups as they form or mould themselves around a specific purpose, such as the execution of a CCF-funded project. A measurement scale of a sense of community is the Community Organization Sense of Community Scale which measures community organisation members' relationship to the organisation, the organisation as a mediator, the influence

of the organisation, and the bond to its community (Peterson et al. 2008:799). One problem with this measurement scale is that it relies heavily on the notion of 'community organising', which is more or less specific to the United States and may not fit with the identities of community organisations elsewhere. In the United States, 'community' has politicised connotations in the community organising movement, based on the work of Saul Alinsky. Accordingly, an analysis of larger socioeconomic issues are inseparable from effective community work.

“An understanding [of] the fashion in which a local community functions within the larger social organism demands a marked departure from the conventional procedures characteristic of that kind of communal organization which proposes that the community elevate itself by means of its own bootstraps. It means that, while the community as a whole is taken as a specific starting-point for a program of social construction, the organizational procedures must direct their attention towards those larger socioeconomic issues which converge upon that scene to create the plight of the area.” (Alinsky 1941:798)

Alinsky's notion of community organising is characterised by systems thinking; however, 'socioeconomic issues' would need to be extended to include ecological issues in order to encompass the notion of SD. Furthermore, a politicisation of community also is more 'spikey' than the 'warmly persuasive' notion of helping one's neighbour.

“While we all may approve of a neighbourhood Scout group out planting trees on a Saturday morning, some of us may not approve of community action to save local green space which is wanted by developers and which may 'bring jobs'. Fewer of us still may support the anarchistic 'direct action' interest community. Thus the attempts to persuade 'the community' to participate in self-management towards the greater good of the majority, ... fly in the face of democratic probity: the majority may not wish to pay the price of the collectivist policies which sustainable development implies.” (Rowe & Robbins 2000:161)

Politicised versus warm and persuasive ideals of community are only two examples of

geographic variations of the term's usage. Country-specific policies and cultures can differentiate forms of community response. For example, 'community' is not necessarily equivalent with 'grassroots'. In Australia, many documented 'community' programmes are actually managed through the state or local governments or NGOs (Moloney et al. 2010). In Scotland, governmental grant programmes such as the CCF implicates at least to some extent that the state indirectly acts through community groups (Taylor Aiken 2014). As the empirical part of the thesis will elaborate, however, community organisations are not merely replicating CCF criteria. Rather, they are agents who utilise government funding to suit their own needs as well as being guided by CCF criteria.

The slipperiness arising from dozens of definitions of 'community' led to calls to abandon the term (Banks 2003). Some argued that community had been turned into “a bland and meaningless concept” for a social analysis of faceless people (Kockel 2012:61). Such criticisms of the term 'community' mirror some criticisms of the term 'sustainability', which remains a contested concept (see e.g. Amelung et al. 2008:7; Franklin & Blyton 2011:5). However, both continue to be influential categories in their own right, but they must be carefully defined to remain useful analytic tools. Like sustainability, 'community' may not refer to an end state, but to something more elusive; the term conjures up an atmosphere which belongs among the knowledge we think with but not about (Blackshaw 2010:1).

In the SD literature, community projects tend to be equated with the local, whereby the 'local' evades clear definition. The 'local' has been framed as the local watershed in relation to food production, or 'other than' regional, national or international spaces, although the concept remains problematic because of ubiquitous global market forces (Sharzer 2012:7). 'Localism' has been associated with a criticism of size (of factories, governments or bureaucracies) or, in relation to environmental thought, with Eric Schumacher and his book *Small is Beautiful* (Sharzer 2012:8). Schumacher's analysis focused on appropriateness of scale (1989:71), rather than on absolute recommendations. Amongst recent academic publications, 'localism' is primarily associated with the Localism Bill, which was announced by the Government of the United Kingdom in 2010 and which refers to “creating a general power of competence

for local government, strengthening community accountability through referendums and other devices, and empowering communities to take over state-run services, especially those threatened with closure” (Lowndes & Pratchett 2012:26). An association of 'communities' and local governments is not new (see e.g. Bowen Rees 1971), but there are other ways in which communities can be meaningful agents in their own right.

Local communities have been framed as an important focus for engagement by sustainability practitioners and educators; they are seen as “important entry points for messages regarding SD, especially those targeted at adults and out-of-school children” (Ospina 2000:39). Community action constitutes a spectrum of engagement that ranges from relative isolationism to systemic change. In United Kingdom policy, 'community development' and 'community work' are traditional professions which involve working with and enabling disadvantaged communities to become more active and (in the social sense) sustainable (Banks 2003:12). However, because SD is an interdisciplinary field, interpretations of community vary and are infused by disciplines such as planning, international development, or political movements. For example, intentional communities such as ecovillages might defend a localism that denies globalisation, offering sites for applied research and demonstration of sustainable practices (Dawson 2006; Sprott 1958). Complementing these aims, geographic communities and communities of practice or interest engage diverse groups of people within their catchment area. 'Communities of practice' may refer to workplaces, universities, and other organisations (Bradbury & Middlemiss 2014:1), or in the most basic sense to "participation in an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing and what that means in their lives and for their communities” (Lave & Wenger 1991:98). Communities of practice “can cradle and nurture social and cognitive skills, habits and attitudes, value-laden stances, emotional patterns and engrained beliefs” (Grasseni 2007:204). Communities of practice might be, for example, sport clubs or associations of practitioners around certain skills such as associations of artists and craftspeople. In contrast, community projects that are more geographically oriented ('communities of place') might aim to (re)build neighbourhood relationships, (co-)design neighbourhoods or engage in capacity building for community governance (Barton 2000). North (2010) argues that an intentional localisation,

characterising many community projects, is an inherently political process. By shifting an emphasis to local relations, such localisation processes counteract globalised cultures of consumerism which drive neoliberal or unrestrained 'free trade' market forces which emphasise growth at any cost. However, while this is at least partially true, community projects aimed at localisation may also be instrumental to an increasingly neoliberal political agenda. Marxist analysts have called localism part of a “*petite bourgeois* ideology” designed to avoid wider social conflict arising from unjust power imbalances (see Sharzer 2012:91). Critical views on local initiatives' capacities to combat large-scale structural issues mimic critiques of anarchism by socialists, in that they argue that capitalism is at the root of these problems, and localism abandons the struggle against wider structural changes (Ganesh & Zoller 2013).

What, then, are the specific potentials of communities to contribute to the sustainability challenge? An emerging body of literature on 'low carbon communities' (see eg. Heiskanen et al. 2010; Peters et al. 2012) and 'community energy' (see e.g. Bomberg & McEwen 2012; Hoffman & High-Pippert 2009; Rogers et al. 2008; Seyfang et al. 2013) suggests that communities are seen as viable agents of change in relation to energy production and consumption, as well as for stimulating behaviour change. In response to the challenge of climate change, energy-related social science has largely been limited to the end user's behaviour (Wilhite et al. 2000) and has therefore largely ignored the social nature of behaviour (Heiskanen et al. 2010). The local community level constitutes a domain in which social behaviour plays out, as well as being a meaningful field in itself, nested between national and local authority efforts on the one hand and individual efforts on the other hand (Moloney et al. 2010, Heiskanen et al. 2010). Establishing sustainability practices at a community level may involve degrees of common resource management, or an advocacy of the commons. The extent to which the commons is advocated depends on whether it is a) explicitly embedded as a concept into the project planning, b) expressed by means of participatory project planning, or c) implicit, in the wider sense in which “even when particular rights are unitized, quantified, and salable, the resource system is still likely to be owned in common rather than individually” (Ostrom 1990:13).



While there are several ways to 'cut the cake' of defining the commons, many notions of the commons are derived from philosophers who introduced the commons more as an ethical, normative concept – in particular Garret Hardin's *Tragedy of the Commons*. Using a communal pasture as an analogy for shared resources, Hardin concluded:

“Each man [sic] is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit--in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons. Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all.” (Hardin 1968)

However, Hardin's theory has been found to be limited to a libertarian notion of commons (something which he later admitted) - perhaps most prominently by Ostrom (1990), who wrote widely on 'commons governance'. Kenrick (2009) distinguishes 'managed commons' from 'open access commons', whereby the former is desirable and the latter is open to abuse, exemplified by the depletion of global natural resources and excess waste generated in, say, the oceans and the atmosphere. Kenrick's negatively loaded use of 'open access' is unhelpful, however, because 'open access' also refers to a type of property rights such as open access journals which make academic writing widely available, or 'creative commons' which, as the term suggests, furthers rather than hinders responsible use of common resources. It might be best to juxtapose 'managed commons' with 'exposed commons', whereby the latter are ungoverned and vulnerable to overexploitation or neglect.

A notion of the commons is bound to be contested, since many natural resources and entities have in fact been subject to legal claims by public or private agents: examples include rights to fish and hunt or land ownership rights. The commons can be divided in terms of 'cultural commons' (e.g. intergenerational 'how-to' knowledges, expressive arts and ceremonies, local language) and the 'environmental commons' (shared access to e.g. forests, rivers, oceans, air and animals) (Bowers 2010). Beyond this, Kenrick extends the notion of the commons to include “life-sustaining or life-enhancing resources and services that have not been divided up and assigned a monetary value in the global

economy but instead are shared - according to evolving arrangements and agreements - among members of a community or group” (2009:51). Kenrick goes even further than Bowers in attributing commons status to assets that are in the hands of local authorities, such as libraries, public parks or pavements, and to services delivered by non-human animals, such as “pollination provided by bees” (Kenrick 2009:51). Furthermore, Kenrick's description of the commons contains verbs and actions such as “sharing, cultivating and dwelling [and] words of comfort given freely and willingly” (Kenrick 2009:51), which suggests that there is a performative element to his notion of the commons which goes beyond material assets. Nespor (2008) further differentiates a definition of the commons by including “‘natural-resource commons’ (for example, water, air), ‘social commons’ (such as education), ‘intellectual and cultural commons’ (ideas, arts, and the like), and ‘species commons’ (gene sequences, bodies)” (Nespor 2008:488). According to Bowers' and Kenrick's definitions, the commons include cultural knowledge and values as well as non-material services, which suggests that the commons evade legal definition. Kenrick's notion of the commons intuitively describes enacted commons, which stands in contrast to, for example, Wightman's historical account of 'common good' assets, referring to common lands which in Scotland are traceable to the 1491 Common Good Act (Wightman 2010). I return to the notion of the commons in section 2.6, as the concept is important for the further development of this thesis.

Another arc of the literature on communities has shaped definitions of the aforementioned concept of resilience, such as Wilding's (2011) definition, which draws heavily upon asset-based models of community development and social capital, and accepts more intuitive interpretations than identified in the systems literature. The Carnegie Trust's 'Petal' model proposes objectives for achieving “the dynamic, vibrant, engaged, sustainable” community in the future, such as optimising assets, enriching social capital and well-being, valuing local distinctiveness or enhancing environmental capacity (Wilding 2011:16). 'Social capital' may be defined as “the resources available to individuals and to society through social relationships” - and as well as involving psychosocial variables “such as trust, norms of reciprocity, and emotional support”, it may take the form of tangible factors “such as cash loans, labour in kind (or) access to

information” (Kawachi 2002:650). Social capital is widely discussed in the literature around public health and inequalities, while critical discussion of asset-based approaches is scarce (Friedli 2012). Asset-based community development essentially refers to community-led planning in which the assets to be developed are defined by a community (O’Leary et al. 2011); however, at other times desirable assets are spelled out more explicitly. Asset-based approaches tend to be immediate rather than structural, ‘human-scale’ rather than explicitly political.

“An assets approach to community development will not, on its own, solve inequality within and between communities – but it can help communities to develop greater confidence and a stronger political voice with which to engage the political system in addressing structural causes of injustice and their roots in an unfair and unsustainable global economic system.” (O’Leary et al. 2011:9)

According to Friedli, individual or collective ‘sense of coherence’ has come to dominate the asset literature, especially psychological resilience in the face of adversity, and she holds that “an analysis of psycho-social factors can function as an alternative to addressing questions of power and privilege and their relationship to the distribution of health and the political production of social inequalities” (2012:3). In poorer communities, this could lead to “an attempt to reproduce ... psycho-social assets that are in fact tied to material advantage” (Friedli 2012:5). If assets are defined in terms of those who write and engage with the literature on assets, then an ‘education bias’ (which may be linked to more affluent social groups) could determine which assets are valued most and may be supported by funding streams. In other words, community assets could become another version of Sharzer’s (2012) ‘petite bourgeois ideology’, which he ascribes to lifestyle choices such as individualised moral judgement, voluntary simplicity and community and ethical lifestyles (93).

“Lifestyles come from habitus, and while they appear as a free choice for individuals, in fact they’re products of a complex set of meanings that ... come from the powers and privileges of their makers.” (Sharzer 2012:91)

A Glasgow Centre for Population Health publication explicitly links resilience to asset-based approaches (McLean 2014). Accordingly, resilience thinking may be subject to the same critiques which apply to asset-based thinking. Materialist notions of resilience such as Gunderson's (2003) and Folke et al.'s (2002) largely circumvent debates about cultural or lifestyle content of resilience in human systems, and they are less well equipped to address non-material needs. Furthermore, and reflecting themes of geopolitics and governance from previous sections, if the socioeconomic and ecological challenges are systemic, who will implement the necessary measures to increase systemic resilience, and at what levels? Efforts to increase resilience at a community level require simultaneous concerted efforts by other, more wide-ranging social institutions to bring about wide-ranging changes.

To summarise the issues at the heart of different notions of resilience, it is possible to over-emphasise non-material psycho-social aims at the expense of tackling the political and material bases of unsustainable systems, as well as to over-emphasise resilience thinking rooted in social capital and asset-based community development at the expense of 'hard' calculations around ecosystemic resource use. All of these obfuscate the question as to why insufficient action is taken to increase resilience at a global level, in the spheres of international politics and corporate activity, which have much more influence in combating global environmental crises. If local communities are given a responsibility to change the technologies of everyday life, conventions, customs and consumption patterns in a culture where comfort – or the perception of a good quality of life – is linked to commercial interest and carbon-intensive lifestyles (Heiskanen et al. 2010), communities might achieve little without a larger, systemic change of market forces or commercial interests underlying these. However, despite these limitations, the local level is one among many agents in implementing SD measures. In the next section, the concept of 'liminality' is introduced, as a way of conceptualising community projects for sustainability within the wider socioeconomic and ecological systems they are part of.

## **2.4 Processes Over Targets? Transition, Liminality and Communitas as Aspects of Community Projects for Sustainability**

My suggestion that community projects in relation to SD play a role as liminal and prefigurative agents of change is an outcome of the empirical analysis of this thesis. However, because the concept of 'liminality' is crucial to the development of later arguments, this section introduces liminality in relation to transition processes within SD. A literature review covering the main concepts - 'transition', 'liminality' and 'communitas' (the collective aspect of liminality) lays the ground work for a discussion and analysis of empirical findings in chapter 7. In the literature, transition is more explicitly associated with SD than liminality, partly because the resilience of social and ecological systems has become associated with transitions in SD. In this thesis, particularly in chapter 7, the focus is on liminality (and the related concept 'communitas') which can be part of transition processes, but also is a state of affairs in its own right. I will begin by defining 'transition', before contextualising the concept of liminality in bodies of literature within academic and practice-based SD discourses.

The word 'transition' is etymologically derived from the Latin word "transitio", meaning "going across". The Oxford English Dictionary defines transition as "a passing or passage from one condition, action, or (rarely) place, to another; change" (OED 2014a). However, there are different, contextually dependent meanings of 'transition'. A Google search of 'transition' and 'policy' reveals that eight out of the first ten results refer to childhood institutions such as schools and nurseries; and this meaning is reflected in academic articles referring to "pubescent transition" (Mouritsen et al. 2012) or "transition to adulthood" (Kirk et al. 2013). In the social sciences or in a policy context, transition may refer to stages of development in childhood and adolescence, or it may refer to a transition between political systems (Weiland 2010). Here I focus in particular on the transition from current unsustainable practices towards more sustainable practices, which constitutes the process of SD.

The concept of 'transition' is beginning to crystallise into particular meanings in SD, some of which can be traced to the Transition<sup>6</sup> Network, which advocates a particular model of community-based activism (Hopkins 2008). In the context of this thesis, 'transition' as a concept in SD does not solely refer to the 'Transition' movement, although one of the case studies (*Sustaining Dunbar*) is a registered Transition initiative, while others (*Playbusters*, *East Kilbride Development Trust*) were influenced or inspired by the movement only to a limited extent. Transition has been called a form of "cultural citizenship" (Stevenson 2011:66) with a distinctly local agenda, but may be better framed in terms of a "wish to create fulfilling livelihoods based in more localised low-carbon economies through grassroots action, rather than protesting 'against' climate change" (North 2011:1582). Transition initiatives are one part complementing other parts of a wider network of environmental activism, specifically in the United Kingdom (North 2011). Ganesh and Zoller (2013) question whether all communities are equally fertile grounds for Transition, because "communities that are particularly vulnerable to ecological devastation are often those that are characterized by hierarchies of exploitation, ranging from powerful global, corporate or state actors to local elites".

'Resilience' is a central concept within Transition thinking, and aims to prepare localities for challenges to come. These challenges are not only the anticipated future effects of anthropogenic global warming or climate change, but also the related problem of 'peak oil'<sup>7</sup> which describes the peak in global oil production, marking the depletion of oil resources and an associated energy resource depletion (Grubb 2011, Hopkins 2008). The Transition movement's notion of localism is porous and cosmopolitan<sup>8</sup> (Ganesh &

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6 I refer to 'Transition' as promoted by the Transition Network with a capital 'T' to differentiate it from other conceptualisations of transition, which are not capitalised.

7 The problem of 'peak oil' has been summarised by Grubb (2011) in the *Peak Oil Primer*, and is closely associated with 'resilience' in relation to problematising the use of fossil fuels, rather than merely addressing its effects such as the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions.

"The rate of oil 'production', meaning extraction and refining (currently about 85 million barrels/day), has grown almost every year of the last century. Once we have used up about half of the original reserves, oil production becomes ever more likely stop growing and begin a terminal decline, hence 'peak'. The peak in oil production does not signify 'running out of oil', but it does mean the end of cheap oil, as we switch from a buyers' to a sellers' market." (Grubb 2011)

8 Cosmopolitanism "has traditionally been associated with mobility and especially elite mobility, [however,] the cultural diversity of many local settings and the power of the media has made it possible to be a

Zoller 2013), with resilience being its central organising concept. Resilience and its characteristic features of diversity, modularity and tightness of feedbacks are part of the Transition movement's identity (Ganesh & Zoller 2013).

“Diversity in the context of community resilience refers to the ability of a community to generate diverse forms of multiplicity such as multiple sources of energy, multiple forms of land use, and multiple sources of livelihood. Modularity, following from this, implies that the collapse of one portion of the community does not result in the automatic collapse of the rest of the community. Finally, tightness of feedbacks refers to how quickly and responsively portions of a community can respond to crises in other parts of it.” (Ganesh & Zoller 2013)

The central role of a systems thinking concept such as resilience within Transition thinking is likely to be rooted in its origin within the 'permaculture' movement, which is made up of systems thinkers and practitioners who aim to bring together principles of “permanent (sustainable) agriculture (and) permanent (sustainable) culture” (Holmgren 2002:xix). Rob Hopkins, one of the founding fathers of the Transition movement, was a permaculture teacher during his first attempt at community visioning in Kinsale, Ireland, which he elaborates on in *The Transition Handbook* (Hopkins 2008:122). According to the Transition movement, resilience differs from sustainability insofar as some activities, such as recycling, may help with a more sustainable production of plastic, but does not help to end a community's reliance on plastic. In contrast, measures that reduce animal and food transportation reduce global energy and increase modularity by reducing a community's dependence on global industrial agriculture (Ganesh & Zoller 2013).

By its very nature, 'transition' describes processes, rather than outcomes. In particular, “transition journeys are non-linear processes, open and uncertain trajectories of search and exploration” (Grin et al. 2010:6). The relationship between processes and practices points towards the temporal nature of production processes - or practice. Bourdieu conceived of practice as inseparable from temporality “because it is entirely immersed

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cosmopolitan without going away at all [and furthermore] postcolonial cosmopolitans are not necessarily travellers.”(Amit 2012:45)

in the current of time” (1990:81). Informed by phenomenology as an epistemological position, Ingold (2011) wrote extensively about processes of 'becoming', which are embedded in and constitute the world:

“Human social life is not cut out on a separate plane from the rest of nature but is part and parcel of what is going on throughout the organic world. It is the process wherein living beings of all kinds, in what they do, constitute each other's conditions of existence, both for their own and for subsequent generations.”  
(Ingold 2011:8)

Thus conceived, 'transition' refers to processes of becoming - including, but not limited to, processes of human deliberation. Transition processes are essential to understanding the concept of liminality. However, while transition processes can be intentional and deliberate (through being steered or governed), they might also refer to 'accidental' processes of change, such as continued ecological degradation. Transition as a process denotes a more long term and significant process of change towards sustainability. In strong conceptualisations of SD, economic growth is increasingly seen as an inadequate progress indicator and an inappropriate aim, as it advocates infinite growth within a finite natural system (Jackson 2009). Hence the sustainability transition process strives towards alternative conceptions of economic systems that promote the present and future well-being of people and planet. Raskin (2006) and others promote a 'great transition' focusing on the value shift required to enable societal change. An emerging trend of 'transition studies' (Wächter 2012) incorporates both action and learning, including a focus on community-based localisation efforts to move beyond a fossil fuel culture and tackle the dual challenges of 'peak oil' and climate change. The use of 'transition' to describe sustainable processes, or processes towards greater sustainability, implies a gradual change, which may involve several stages. In order to understand how change happens, it is useful to conceptualise several stages of change in the transformation of a system.

In environmental planning, transition has been described as having spatial, temporal, and intermediate elements, opening up new possibilities to address environmental



problems that are symptomatic of a conflict between society, economy and nature:

"Transitions mark the (time-)space between places in space and between qualitatively different places of time. ... Transition is a structural category in space and time." (Hofmeister 2002:123)

Hofmeister conceived what she called spatiotemporal transitions as emerging from planning authorities rather than from the grassroots. However, the notion of spatial and temporal transitions is relevant to different levels of SD. SD has a visionary nature (Hofmeister 2002) that implies journeying toward a future state of affairs that challenges the current socioeconomic status quo. Identifying aspects of transition processes is useful to describe manifestations of SD at different stages, times and scales within a given society. While a society overexploits non-renewable resources and exceeds its globally fair share of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions, the society can be deemed unsustainable, and there can only be indicators of transition processes within some parts of this society. Hence I describe 'transition processes' on various levels, not one imagined monolithic transition process. In particular, transition processes may involve different stages, which may be conceptualised as liminal – whereby the presence of liminal manifestations of SD within a society does not necessarily imply that the wider society is transitioning towards SD, as I explore below. Even though 'transition' and 'liminality' are sometimes used interchangeably, there is a qualitative difference to the kind of in-betweenness they refer to. While transition may refer to a flux from one state to another or provide an outline or a map how to get from 'state a' to 'state b', liminality is more descriptive of the in-between-state itself – the space between 'state a' and 'state b'. The use of 'transition' in sustainability discourses is important to understanding liminality, and to elaborate on the phenomenological ontology of becoming which underpins my analysis of the social roles of community projects. Here I first outline the origins and meanings of liminality, before moving on to its relevance as an analytic tool to describe the role of community projects in relation to sustainability-related transition processes within societies.

The concept of 'liminality' is crucial to this thesis, as I suggest that community projects

for sustainability have liminal characteristics (see chapter 7). Turner (1987) categorised 'transition' as well as liminality as 'betwixt and between'. Liminality is to a large extent derived from the writings of theorists within social anthropology and divinity, in relation to ritual. The etymological origin of liminality is the Latin word 'limen', meaning threshold. Arnold Van Gennep's 1960 book *The Rites of Passage* introduced the concept of rites of passage to the field of social anthropology, marking changes in social categories or conditions, occurring, for example, through birth, marriage or funerals. Liminality is the second out of the three stages of separation, liminality and reintegration. In Van Gennep's work, liminality is discussed primarily in relation to rituals that mark distinct transitions in stages of life within societies, such as the transition from adolescence into adulthood, often in indigenous cultures. The liminal stage is the in-betweenness that might manifest itself, for example, in a temporary physical separation, before the individuals undergoing the rites are reintegrated in their societies or social groups. However, they are not merely reintegrated in their old roles; instead, they have changed and taken on the new roles and responsibilities which come with those roles. Turner distinguished between what he called technologically 'simpler' societies' ritualistic liminal separation in space and time, and 'liminoid' expressions of leisure (for example, theatre or nightlife) in technologically 'complex' societies (in Schechner 1994:640). The distinction between liminal and liminoid is only helpful where there is a narrow conceptualisation of ritual as being about the people who perform it, rather than about the transformation of wider societies which, for example, hedonistic ritualistic occurrences associated with nightlife fall short of fulfilling. Liminality in SD may refer to wider social and political processes of change, and to collective (rather than individualistic) practices which transform their participants. The element of 'togetherness' is closely connected to liminality through the concept of *communitas*. Victor Turner further developed Van Gennep's ideas to highlight liminal spaces in other forms of societal change. He expanded on the particular significance of the social bonding which occurs during the liminal separation:

“It is in this liminality that *communitas* emerges, if not as a spontaneous expression of sociability, at least in a cultural and normative form – stressing equality and comradeship as norms rather than generating spontaneous and existential *communitas*” (Turner 1975:232).

The state of *communitas* or “free and equal comrades” (Turner 1975:233) is contrasted with a structured society in which individuals are categorised into roles; where society is seen as a 'whole' and individuals take on particular structural positions. As such, the state of *communitas* symbolises a divergence from dominant social structures and presents a form of “anti-structure” (Turner 1975) that diverges from the norm. Anti-structure may foster “emotions to affirm an alternative (dis)order of things, which stress ‘generic rather than particularistic relationships’” (Blackshaw 2010:91), whereby 'particularistic relationships' include relatives, friends or romantic partners. *Communitas* therefore has a levelling effect which Blackshaw claims might even be able to temporarily “transcend the limitations of class, gender, race, nationality, politics, religion or even geography” (2010:91). The downside of this levelling effect is that existing inequalities can be temporarily glossed over and remain unaddressed, a point I will return to in later chapters. The relative nature of a levelling effect of liminality and *communitas* points towards Blackshaw's criticism of Turner, stating that Turner's notion of liminality is too simplistic with a view to how wider social and power relations affect the expression of liminal states.

“Turner’s account is blind to the metaphysical problem of what constitutes social reality. Indeed, ...Turner makes the mistake of identifying social reality as a reified structural entity, and in this sense is clearly positivistic. The ontological position of positivism presumes that there is a world or reality out there waiting to be discovered or known, and the aim of positivist research is to reveal the truth about the world, and in so doing, learn how to measure, control and predict it.” (Blackshaw 2010:94)

Indeed, a tendency for the literature around liminality to abstract social phenomena does not always sufficiently account for the particular manifestations - or the 'who, how, why and where' - of liminality and *communitas*. Blackshaw's critique mirrors to some extent some of the critical voices around 'community' explored in the previous section, such as Guijt and Shah's (1998) warning that assumptions of homogeneity within the community literature gloss over existing inequalities. However, the fact that 'liminality' (including *communitas*) and 'community' are vulnerable to similar critiques further

suggests an affinity of the concepts.

Beyond an exploration of the nature of liminality (including *communitas*), the concept is significant for wider analyses of social change in relation to the global systemic crises described in section 2.1. The relevance of liminality to SD is illuminated by Van Gennep's notion that 'rites of passage', the conceptual ritualistic vessel for liminal states, could be performed "on occasions of collective crisis when a whole society faces a major change, peace to war, health to epidemic, and so forth" (Turner 1979:466). The global economic growth-centered status quo could be called an 'unsustainable hegemony' (a concept usually referring to cultural dominance, see e.g. Williams 2002:3), which through its disintegrating effects on ecological systems and non-renewable resources may be termed a collective crisis. I refer to community projects as liminal because of their role in sustainability transition processes, and because of the role of ritual in fostering a mindset of co-operation (Sennett 2012) which is prerequisite to building community. The liminal aspects of anti-structure and outsiderhood in community projects suggest that 'another world is possible' (Roy 2003), in the sense that community projects can manifest different, more sustainable modes of being and practice which are different from mainstream practices. Liminality in relation to community projects to some extent mirrors the notion of 'prefiguration' from anarchist geographies, where it refers to spatial and political imagination (Ince 2012) which involves "actively developing the alternative political structures needed to transform the way power operates" (Maeckelbergh 2011:1). Blackshaw (2010) explicitly deems liminality, *communitas* and anti-structure to be key concepts in community studies.

The conceptualisation of community projects as liminal spaces for SD emerged partly from issues of scale, because community projects are of a local nature, while SD's 'wicked problems' tend to be of a global nature. Firstly, using 'liminality' as an analytic tool pragmatically acknowledges that the material impact of community projects cannot be measured without high degrees of uncertainty. The extent of greenhouse gas (GHG) release into the atmosphere and the anthropogenic causes are identified through meta-analyses of large data sets, but the modelling of impacts on global climate systems is still subject to high degrees of uncertainty (Kuik et al. 2008). Equally, marginal

abatement cost curves in carbon modelling are still very uncertain (Kuik et al. 2008). With regards to impacts of global climate systems on local regions ('local commons'), there are bound to be even higher levels of uncertainty. If carbon abatement costs for political regimes are subject to a wide range of estimates (Fischer & Morgenstern 2006), then the measurability of impacts of local community projects, which draw upon these estimates, may be even more uncertain. For example, a community garden may produce a relatively small amount of food, but each variable (for example, whether participants drive to the sites, the everyday food choices of local residents, and the local supply chains) complicate accurate measurements of carbon savings to the extent that it may not be economically viable or possible to produce reliable results. Therefore, community projects which aim to tackle climate change operate in an uncertain realm – because of their small scale, their CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions reductions are difficult (or even impossible) to estimate. Furthermore, localised CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions reductions cannot prevent climate change spinning out of control globally without internationally co-ordinated action. Using liminality as an analytic tool to conceive of the impacts of community projects for sustainability and climate action acknowledges that (temporal) transition processes towards more sustainable ways of life are headed towards an unknown destination with uncertain outcomes for people and planet. The only certainty manifested within community projects for sustainability consists of glimpses of sustainable potentialities within the present moment, and community projects which propose small-scale solutions to social and environmental problems which may never be sufficiently upscaled. Here, 'liminal' means 'unfinished'.

In summary, Hofmeister's spatiotemporal transitions and Van Gennep's and Turner's liminal stage are ways to conceptualise projects and movements which exemplify and demonstrate sustainable practices and potential for change within this unsustainable hegemony. Liminality, with its characteristics 'betwixt and between', *communitas*, and 'stand-alone state', hermeneutically describes community projects' relative marginalisation and pioneering practices, or their role as part of wider transition processes towards sustainability.

After introducing transition processes within SD, and outlining how liminal

characteristics manifest themselves within community projects, in the next section I investigate developments around education for SD and, emerging from these, phenomenological understandings of 'becoming'. The notion of 'becoming' is closely linked to conceiving of SD as multiple, yet interlinked processes instead of an 'end state' of sustainability. One important strand of SD-related processes is found in the literature around education for SD and, in particular, 'learning sustainability'.

## **2.5 Education for Sustainable Development in Scotland: Towards a Phenomenology of 'Learning Sustainability'**

One strength of community projects for sustainability is their capacity to engage their participants in informal learning about SD in theory and practice, which I describe as 'learning sustainability'. In this section, I review the literature relevant to 'learning sustainability'. I begin by describing the state of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), particularly in a Scottish context. I then move on to describing non-institutional settings of 'learning sustainability' through practice-based, immersive forms of education, such as those offered by community projects. Some of the underlying mechanisms of learning are explored in relation to phenomenology. The empirical analysis of learning sustainability within the case studies is explored within the case studies in chapter 6.

The last decade or so has shown a shift away from the advancement of 'environmental education', in favour of ESD (Nikel & Reid 2006). ESD was prominently exemplified through the United Nations' Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), which ran from 2005-2014 (United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2008). The implementation of DESD is framed as a multi-level stakeholder project:

“There are partners at all levels – subnational (local, community), national,

regional and international, and from all spheres – governmental, civil society and NGOs, and private.” (UNESCO 2005:9-10)

Reviewing the state of DESD in the United Kingdom, Martin et al. (2013) note that in 2010, the scope for mainstreaming ESD in government operations was considerable, and “whilst ESD was growing in post-16 learning sectors, it was at an early stage of development in adult and community learning, though there were excellent examples of practice in these settings” (1526). There is a consensus among ESD researchers that there is a need for ESD to be implemented across education policy and institutions in a strategic manner (Martin et al. 2013; McNaughton 2007; Sterling & Gray-Donald 2007). DESD is only one avenue through which ESD is promoted; with the decade coming to an end, longer-term views were focused on curriculum reform in schools but were expanded to include other educational contexts, as is explored in later paragraphs. ESD seeks to foster a sense of responsibility in pupils (Nikel & Reid 2006), as well as moral values of justice and fairness (Ospina 2000). Nevertheless, across Europe, the teaching of ESD in schools tends to depend primarily on the commitments of individual teachers, rather than an embeddedness in curricula (Nikel & Reid 2006). Some authors have stated that the ultimate aim should be to implement ESD in all areas of education and education levels - primary, secondary, higher, adult and vocational education - “and in formal, non-formal or informal learning settings” (de Haan et al. 2010:200).

In the Scottish context, McNaughton (2007) compares the manifestation of ESD within schools to a “Sleeping Beauty Syndrome” (621) to convey the story's three phases of emergence, obscurity and re-emergence. In the first phase, after the Rio Summit in 1992, a key document for ESD called *Learning for Life* was produced, which linked up learning within schools with a systemic view by recognising “if its suggestions for the development of environmental and sustainability education were to be implemented successfully, then the whole system, that is, Government and its agencies, commercial and voluntary sectors, education bodies and schools, must work in partnership” (McNaughton 2007:624).

“[*Learning for Life* reflected, and was grounded in] contemporary understandings

of effective pedagogy in education and the field [and its suggestion of] six key educational themes. These themes are that environmental and sustainability education should be: systemic, holistic, active and participative, based on and in the environment, values focused, and should enable learners to be competent to take action for the environment” (McNaughton 2007:624).

In the years after 1993, there appeared to be little political will to implement ESD in Scottish schools with the exception of the Eco-Schools programme, which since 1995 “aims to help schools to move from simple class and school activities using ideas from structured packs and lesson plans through stages towards a whole school ethos of sustainable living” (McNaughton 2007:628). Critics of the model thought it to be rather narrow and, by being based on the attainment of awards, “essentially top-down, with general, external standards and measures being applied to school communities”<sup>9</sup> (McNaughton 2007:628). In the third phase of ESD within Scottish schools, ESD has gained prominence once again within the curriculum review *A Curriculum for Excellence* (McNaughton 2007; Martin et al. 2013) since 2004, which has the set aims to enable pupils to become “successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society” (McNaughton 2007:629). However, there is a tension between systemic, holistic, process-oriented aspirations of ESD and the relatively narrow confinements of educational institutions. McNaughton (2007) identifies problems around reconciling a process-based (problem-solving, action-based) approach required by ESD with a product-based (acquisition of knowledge, mastery of skills) school curriculum.

“There is a lack of research evidence that establishes, conclusively, the most beneficial ways of developing and delivering a systematic, progression-based yet process-based sustainable development education curriculum. This is indicative, perhaps, of the complex nature of sustainable development education. The many overlapping skills and concepts, together with the emotional/affective dimensions and the elusive nature of ‘values’ do not match themselves to a rigidly objectives-

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9 The Eco-Schools scheme is administered by Keep Scotland Beautiful, the same charity which administers the CCF. McNaughton's (2007) criticism of the Eco-Schools scheme being top-down (628) mirror Creamer's (2014) analysis that the organic organisation of community projects is misaligned with the “top-down” (15) funding structures of the CCF.



based, cognition and skills model of progression.” (McNaughton 2007:635)

McNaughton's conclusions suggest that formal educational institutions are, in their current set-up, limited in implementing ESD among pupils. This suggests a need for a systemic re-evaluation of the procedures within formal education, perhaps one which goes further than the *Curriculum for Excellence* in evaluating some of the rationales and priorities around forms of assessment, and the conceptualisation, implementation and strengthening of various avenues to promote ESD outwith educational institutions and in more informal settings.

The Scottish Government's publication *Learning for our future: Scotland's first action plan for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development* (2006) acknowledges the need for diversity and breadth in approaches to promote ESD. The report identifies three main areas for action with respect to ESD: “learning for sustainable development is a core function of the formal education system; there are lifelong opportunities to learn; the sustainable development message is clearly understood” (Scottish Executive 2006:iv). Recognising that progress in these areas is best made by working with partners and stakeholders, the Scottish Government aimed to promote ESD through “education and learning in its broadest sense including school education, further and higher education, all aspects of lifelong learning, community learning, and other types of informal education, recognising the roles of the public, private, voluntary and community sectors” (Scottish Executive 2006:1). Martin et al. (2013) conclude that compared to England, Wales and Northern Ireland, in Scotland the “devolved government has placed a much greater emphasis on social equity and the environment as key policy targets” (1536). In line with the Scottish Government's aim to promote ESD within a community context, the CCF constitutes an effort by the Scottish Government to encourage local communities to engage with SD and exemplifies a non-formal education stream for “successful modes of learning and of embedding sustainable development across Scotland” (Martin et al. 2013:1530). However, due to the short-term, output-led nature of community projects funded through the CCF grant scheme (Creamer 2014:15), the future of ESD through non-formal education in Scotland, such as community settings, is uncertain. Recently, a

network organisation has emerged, 'Learning for Sustainability Scotland', which is hosted within the University of Edinburgh. The Scottish Government is part of this network, alongside a range of local authorities, educational institutions, non-governmental organisations and environmental charities. The network's vision is described as follows:

"Our vision is for Learning for Sustainability to infuse the whole of Scottish society, building our capacity to contribute to sustainability – locally, nationally and globally." (Learning for Sustainability Scotland 2013:2)

'Learning for Sustainability Scotland' aims to achieve its vision by identifying and sharing existing knowledge, generating new knowledge, and monitoring and evaluating progress (Learning for Sustainability Scotland 2013:2). Because the network has only recently emerged, it is too early to know to what extent its aims are starting to be achieved.

Based on existing and emerging institutions in which ESD can take place in Scotland, there is no shortage of potential pathways for the implementation of ESD. The challenge is to integrate ESD into the fabric of Scottish society through the curricula of educational institutions, but also through other, more informal modes of education. I now move on to describing different ways of 'learning sustainability'. One way of conceiving of learning sustainability education is through 'sustainability literacy', referring to a wide range of practices that people are empowered to participate in, by acquiring the skills needed for such participation (Stibbe & Luna 2009:11).

“As people gain *sustainability literacy* skills, they become empowered to read society critically, discovering insights into the unsustainable trajectory that society is on and the social structures that underpin this trajectory. But more than this, they become empowered to engage with those social structures and contribute to the re-writing of self and society along more sustainable lines.” (Stibbe & Luna 2009:11)

Sustainability literacy is a multi-faceted approach (Stibbe & Luna 2009) to learning a range of theoretical and practical skills, and feeling empowered to use them. Sterling and Gray-Donald (2007) critique sustainability literacy by juxtaposing the concept with “deeper implications for change in educational thinking, learning and practice” (242). However, sustainability literacy in particular areas on the one hand, and wide-ranging structural and institutional changes on the other are not mutually exclusive, which the authors acknowledge (Sterling & Gray-Donald 2007:243). Sustainability literacy is a useful way to conceive of educational change where the wider, “paradigmatic change” (Sterling & Gray-Donald 2007:243) has not come to fruition. Sterling and Gray-Donald find that “looking at the overall response of formal education systems, policies and practitioners to the socio-economic-ecological critical conditions that we face, it is hard to escape the thought that, ironically, education is a ‘slow learner’.” (2007:247), a finding which corresponds to McNaughton's (2007) account of ESD in Scottish schools.

Outwith the formal education system there may be more scope for ESD to consider experimental modes of learning which are oriented towards processes. For example, the field of outdoor education promotes “the value of an authentic experience of animals and plants in their natural environment as part of formal (or informal) education related to nature, ecology and environmental studies” (Scott et al. 2014:47). One criticism of outdoor education was that a nature-immersed educational experience without human interactions might enhance a sense of self but not of relationships, so some scholars and practitioners put place-based relationships at the heart of immersive educational experiences (Piersol 2014; Scott Cato 2013). Place-based education, which involves enabling students to get to know and understand their local environment, ought to “encourage students to become familiar with, to understand and indeed to relish their dependency on the natural systems of the planet” (Higgins 2010:180). The concept of 'place' in place-based education is somewhat problematic and may be defined in various ways (Nestor 2008). For example, a school is also a place, albeit an institutionalised one.

A locally rooted dimension to 'learning sustainability' invites open-ended learning processes involving teachers and learners, and more experimental, immersive or

informal forms of learning than those with a primary focus on conveying expertise. The dimension of time associated with learning of this kind, especially as potential life-long learning, is illustrated in Toren's (2009) concept of learning as a 'microhistorical process', structured through a human's relations with other humans (and, I would add, the more-than-human world) from birth onwards. The dominant areas of problem-solving in the field of sustainability are likely to shift significantly over a lifetime, as phenomena such as climate change and biodiversity loss unfold. As learners react to and engage with new information, be it through second-hand or first-hand experiences, they may shift their priorities and learning. Scott Cato writes that "being a sustainability educator is a challenging calling"; in addition to facing threats "to our own survival and to the richness of our planet, we must grasp the vastness of that responsibility, find pathways to different ways of living, and then inspire our students to join us in following these" (2013:13). She identifies a reason why sustainability education is a problematic area for policy-makers: the hallmark of the field is uncertainty or even "substantial ignorance" (Scott Cato 2013:1), rather than more knowable risk management often driving policy-making.

Learning as a relational process (Toren 2009; Scott Cato 2013) is best understood in the context of relational accounts of the human being, such as those emerging from within the phenomenological tradition. Learning involves cognitive processes, and neuroscientific findings converge with philosophical analyses in the concept of intersubjectivity (see e.g. Toren 2009; Stuart 2011; Ingold 2000; Ingold 2011). Intersubjectivity essentially means that the "moving, feeling, perceiving body is at the core of lived experience", and thereby not limited to an individualised self, but "in the world and with others" (Stuart 2011: 147). The cognitive bases of intersubjectivity lies in the challenging of mind-body dualism, as in neuroscientist Damasio's book *Descartes' Error*:

"The organism constituted by the brain-body partnership interacts with the environment as an ensemble, the interaction being of neither the body nor the brain alone. But complex organisms such as ours do more than just interact, more than merely generate the spontaneous or reactive external responses known collectively as behavior. They also generate internal responses, some of which

constitute images (visual, auditory, somatosensory, and so on), which I postulate as the basis for mind.” (Damasio 1994:88-9)

For the purpose of understanding the significance of cognitive elements of 'learning sustainability', it suffices to note that hypotheses of cognition such as Damasio's have influenced phenomenological accounts, such as Ingold's (2000; 2011), of the intersubjectivity of being-in-the-world. Ingold (2011) sought to unite phenomenology and ecology into one single paradigm, and conceives of making processes as 'weaving' to highlight “the improvisatory creativity to work things out as it goes along (and) determinate ends conceived in advance” (10). Scott Cato states that sustainability education draws on tools of education more usually found in the development of a craft skill (using narratives and demonstrations), and indeed suggests that sustainability itself might be akin to a craft skill (2013). However, the complexity of 'learning sustainability' suggests that the metaphor is incomplete - whether or not sustainability is akin to a craft skill depends on how sustainability is defined, and to what extent theory necessitates practice, and vice versa. The kinds of active, informal learning happening within community projects exemplifies practice-based ways of 'learning sustainability' which correspond to Scott Cato's notion of sustainability as a craft skill. For example, participation in community gardens helps learners gain “a wide range of ... sustainability literacy skills that are useful in other contexts” (Clavin 2009:70).

Ways of 'learning sustainability' which are informal and practice-based are consistent with Scott Cato & Myers' notion of “education as re-embedding (in which) knowledge is constructed through social practice” (2010:53). Both 'social' and 'practice' are of importance here. The social element of community projects has been discussed; the 'practice' element takes primacy in the approaches to 'sustainability learning' - also conceived as 'production'. Revisiting Marx, Ingold proposes that 'production' ought to be given an existential primacy, expressed through an intransitivity of the term (2011: 6).

“Conceived as the attentive movement of a conscious being, bent upon the tasks of life, the productive process is not confined within the finalities of any particular project. It does not start with an image and finish with an object but carries on

through, without beginning or end, punctuated – rather than initiated or terminated – by the forms, whether mental or ideal, that it sequentially brings into being.” (Ingold 2011: 6)

A performative ('productive') aspect to learning has similar characteristics to process-oriented, immersive forms of learning mentioned earlier: all of these deal with real-world phenomena rather than theoretical knowledge, albeit with different foci. Immersive forms of outdoor and place-based education foster experiential knowledge while production-based education fosters performative knowledge; however, the two are not mutually exclusive. Another advantage of practice-based sustainability learning is its visibility: through the construction of gardens or the making of crafts from recycled materials, sustainability learning is extended beyond its immediate practitioners and percolates to the wider community - at least to some extent.

In summary, viewed through the lens of Ingold's process-oriented phenomenological ontology, 'learning sustainability' becomes an open-ended process, which at the same time goes with the flow ('microhistorical processes') and deliberates about specific targets, such as reducing carbon emissions, through specific skills, such as growing food. Learning in community projects involves informal, social, intersubjective, embodied ways of learning. The next section will expand on some of these insights, especially on the relational aspect of learning with regard to the collective, communal element of togetherness that is fostered by community projects.

## **2.6 The Fragility of the Commons: Roles of Community Projects in a 'Long Emergency'**

This chapter has been ambitious in scope. It began with an overview of converging global crises of the biosphere, including climate change, which have given birth by necessity to SD with varying responsibilities and priorities across the geopolitical

spectrum. The notion of 'community' plays a role in questions around distributed governance within SD, and the concepts of transition and liminality were introduced in relation to community projects for SD. Finally, the role of community projects in fostering informal ways of 'learning sustainability', and in non-institutionalised manifestations of ESD, was explored. Despite the diversity of themes explored, there is a common thread around the role of communities in social systems, whether they are part of transitioning towards a more sustainable society, or prefiguring glimpses of collective sustainable practices. In relation to the role of communities in SD, this section revisits the notion of the commons, which has been touched on in section 2.2, while revisiting some of the themes discussed in previous sections.

To revisit the global environmental crisis and threat to the biosphere, Kunstler's (2005) notion of a 'long emergency' is helpful. While global problems such as climate change, biodiversity decline, and the depletion of natural resources can be counteracted to some extent, their effects are here to stay, and are likely to worsen and to change civilisations and ways of life significantly over the coming decades and centuries.

“The salient fact about life in the decades ahead is that it will become increasingly and intensely local and smaller in scale. It will do so steadily and by degrees as the amount of available cheap energy decreases and the global contest for it becomes more intense. The scale of all human enterprises will contract with the energy supply. We will be compelled by the circumstances of the Long Emergency to conduct the activities of daily life on a smaller scale, whether we like it or not, and the only intelligent course of action is to prepare for it.” (Kunstler 2005:239)

While Kunstler's meta-analysis of future trends is based on estimates and guesses based on current trends, there are indications (elaborated on in section 2.2) that we have entered a 'long emergency' already. As previously mentioned, the struggle to reach an internationally binding agreement to mitigate climate change (to an extent where it becomes manageable) was set back when the interim and not legally binding Copenhagen Accord was produced in 2009 (Parker et al. 2012:282), and biodiversity loss and overexploitation of non-renewable natural resources are at critical stages

(Rockström et al. 2009). Hence, proponents of SD have to re-think strategies to counteract the effects of unprecedented global systemic uncertainties. Individuals, households, communities, countries and international communities have the option to intensify competition for increasingly scarce resources. An alternative goal is to strengthen co-operation and 'commons thinking', and find ways of managing and governing commons resources within their limits.

Following on from section 2.3, Kenrick's (2009) notion of the commons as having performative attributes and Wightman's (2010) notion of 'common good' assets which should be legally recognised represent two notions which diverge but are both crucial aspects of the commons. 'Commons thinking', which goes hand in hand with the promotion of finding ways of managing or 'governing' (Ostrom 1990) the commons, may point towards ways of tackling the ecological crises, by assuming collective responsibility in moving towards appropriate forms of management of the commons. 'Appropriate' here refers to ways in which managed commons promote SD goals and processes such as equity, fair share and future-oriented resource usage. Community projects for sustainability have an affinity with the commons, which manifests itself especially when communities co-own and manage resources communally (within the case studies, *Sustaining Dunbar* collaborated with Dunbar Community Woodland, which communally own a local forest). Even where no co-ownership in real terms is involved, the co-operation implied in communal activities, as well as the requirements of temporarily co-managed sites such as community gardens, fosters elements of collaborative learning that translate into 'commons thinking'.

In the following paragraph, I investigate where the commons are placed in a systemic approach to SD, building on the literature review in section 2.1. Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed an ecological model of human development involving categories of nested systems he calls microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems and chronosystems (1979). Bronfenbrenner's model is not the only model in which “ecological, biological, social and psychological processes (operate) at a variety of nested temporal scales” (Quilley 2011:65), but it is one which has been frequently reproduced and lends itself to adaptations for particular purposes. I adapted Bronfenbrenner's model (see Illustration 1) to include the commons as spheres, and two



levels of agency – each categorised as local and global. In this socio-ecological system model, the agents (for example, individuals, communities or nation states) may be either managing, exploiting or neglecting the entities which make up the commons (such as bioregions or ecosystems).



*Illustration 1: Commons Spheres and Agents*

*(Source: Author's own; adapted from Bronfenbrenner 1979)*

The nested approach does not imply that local agents cannot influence global commons, or that global agents cannot influence local commons, but merely hints at the 'most appropriate scale' at which the commons could be managed. Communities are situated as being the most appropriate level of managing (or governing) local commons, however, they might also influence global commons by running, for example, projects which aim to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions.

The boundaries between spheres in illustration 2.1 – global commons, global agents, local commons and local agents – are permeable and, to some extent, fluid. For

example, individuals elect their national governments who represent them at an international level. Local and global commons are interdependent - ecosystems, for example, are not closed systems since they depend on exchanges with other ecosystems and are influenced by atmospheric changes (one example is the dependency of marine or land-based ecosystems on a relatively stable climate). Within Bronfenbrenner's educational model, the ecological environment "is conceived as a set of nested structures" (Bronfenbrenner 1979:3), although 'ecological' can refer to those human and cultural systems in which individual development takes place. Systems thinkers express the interconnectedness of human and ecological systems, and define resilience as the ability of ecosystems to bounce back from external shocks (Gunderson & Holling 2002). Human and ecological systems require different tools to increase resilience - for example, individuals benefit from cognitive strategies such as thoughtful risk perception and self-perception, which accentuate resilience (Shaw et al. 2014). Meanwhile, the resilience of the 'local commons' and the 'global commons' spheres is, for example in the case of ecosystems, vulnerable to negative factors influencing biodiversity, such loss of entire species (Folke et al. 2004).

In summary, the notion of the commons weaves together the different strands in this chapter - protecting the unravelling biosphere through measures of SD and appropriate governance structures, communities as prefigurative niches and part of transition processes. The chapter, furthermore, elaborated on the concept of liminality in relation to community projects. There is an affinity between ritual and collectives, echoing Sennett's words that "ritual makes expressive co-operation work" (2012:17). At the same time, 'liminality's connotation with outsiderhood alludes to the relatively marginalised role of community projects in the unsustainable societies within which they operate. Relational learning involving place can, in the absence of collective ownership and cohesive management strategies for local and global commons, foster 'commons thinking' and shared responsibilities. In the empirical chapters (5,6,7) of this thesis, I elaborate on the notion that within their limits, community projects are liminal, prefigurative spaces which convey some possibilities for 'commons thinking'. While the ultimate contribution of community projects to wider sustainability transition processes is uncertain, their present contribution is already valuable in its own right. However,

reflecting Engelman's (2013) quote at the beginning of the chapter, a wider unsustainable system is manifest, for example, in CO<sub>2</sub>e-intensive infrastructure and social inequalities. Given the unravelling of the biosphere, sustainability conceptualised as 'safety' for humanity cannot be achieved by community projects alone, but depends on wide-scale structural changes. Before beginning the presentation of data and empirical analysis, the following chapter analyses the CCF, the grant body which enabled the community projects (or local agents) that make up the case studies, in the light of Scottish climate governance (or the sphere of global agency).

# **CHAPTER THREE - A Scottish Approach to Governance: Some Characteristics of the Climate Challenge Fund**

## **3.0 Introduction**

*“Public policy requires public support. Shifts in thinking therefore lead to shifts in policy and in the distribution of funds. ... Only a society-wide change of mind, expressed through democratic choices, will ever put effective brakes on environmental degradation.” (Warren 2009:375)*

Following on from the literature review of chapter 2 which touched on global politics in general, the overarching aim of this chapter is to 'set the scene' for analysing the case studies in the following chapters by providing an overview of Scottish climate policies and governance styles. Furthermore, this chapter outlines the wider mechanisms which underlie and shape the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) as a whole and, specifically, the case studies. The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 (CCSA) sets intermediate and long-term targets in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Through the CCF, the Scottish Government encourages an array of community groups to lower their CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions, through which these groups contribute to Scotland's overall CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions reductions. After contextualising the CCF within Scottish climate politics, particular characteristics of the fund are explored.

### **3.1 Directions in Sustainability Development, Climate Policy and the Rise of Communities in Scotland**

This section begins with an overview of global climate policy, and Scottish climate policy in particular. The CCF is part of and contributes to meeting the targets of the Scottish Government's climate policy. Through its focus on reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>e, the CCF can be characterised as a climate change mitigation initiative on a community level, although as later chapters will explore, climate change mitigation was only one aspect of CCF-funded community projects, who had much wider SD remits.

As part of the United Kingdom, Scotland was included in the 190 countries that signed the Kyoto treaty, and thereby committed to reduce carbon emissions from a 1990 baseline (Climate Change [Scotland] Act 2009). Constituting a crucial milestone in global climate change negotiations, the Kyoto treaty did not require emissions reductions from 'majority world' countries, which implicitly acknowledges and addresses global inequalities to some extent. Despite the negative impact of financial crises and austerity in the 'minority world' on funds available to mitigate climate change (Ervine 2013), 'minority world' countries tend to still be at an advantage. Unlike 'majority world' countries, where climate change already has a notable adverse impact (Leisher et al. 2012) due to their geographical position, many 'minority world' countries have more time to prepare and act on climate change before the impacts are strongly felt.

The Scottish Government is legally bound to meet internationally agreed climate change targets, which were set as 92% CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions reduction from 1990 levels by 2050 for the United Kingdom in the Kyoto treaty (United Nations 1998). The resulting Climate Change Acts in the United Kingdom and Scotland respectively are legally binding, whereas the European Union's climate change mitigation targets are not legally binding (see table 1).

*Table 1: The European Union's, the United Kingdom's and Scotland's Targets to Reduce Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>e*

	<b>European Union</b> (indicative rather than legally binding)	<b>United Kingdom, Climate Change Act 2008</b>	<b>Scotland, Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009</b>
<b>Emission reductions by 2020 (from 1990 baseline)</b>	20%	at least 26%	42%
<b>Emission reductions by 2040 (from 1990 baseline)</b>	40%	N/a	N/a
<b>Emission reductions by 2050 (from 1990 baseline)</b>	80-95%	At least 80%	80%

*Sources: United Kingdom Government 2008; European Union 2013; Scottish Government 2009*

With a target of 42% CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions reduction by 2020, the Scottish Government has the most ambitious short-term target. While Scotland's long-term target (80% reduction by 2050) is potentially below the European Union's target (80-95% reduction by 2050), the Scottish target is legally binding and thus 'stronger' than the European target in governance terms.

The implementation processes of the climate change acts in the United Kingdom and Scotland emerge from the policy styles of the sovereign state and the country, respectively. Historically, a centralist school of governance has dominated the United Kingdom as well as Scotland (Cairney 2011). The British and Scottish Governments “are bound by common logics related to the role of the executive and the need to engage in policy making that is largely incremental and based on close relationships with pressure participants” (Cairney 2011:210). Since the formation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999, the Scottish Government sets central targets and imposes statutory duties which all local authorities are obliged to comply with. Jackson has characterised Scottish environmental governance as generally 'top-down' or centralised in terms of its approach to directing regional governance:

“The Scottish dirigiste<sup>10</sup> approach offers its local councils a consistent policy

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<sup>10</sup> 'Dirigisme' is an approach to governance which emphasises the positive role of state interventions, often involving centralised economic planning (Chen 2013).

framework, allowing them to focus on specific measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while avoiding concerns about free-rider effects from non-participating councils.” (Jackson 2012:1)

The Scottish Government's climate change policy dirigiste approach has the disadvantage that local authorities may evade taking action locally where allocated central government money is perceived to be inadequate (Jackson 2012:7). Riddoch (2013:196) also attributes to Scotland a centralised governance system, on the basis that Scotland has the biggest local authority catchment areas in Europe, which correlates with large-scale landownership and remote landlords. A comparison with European countries of a similar population size (4-6 million) highlights Scotland's relatively centralised governance structure<sup>11</sup>. Riddoch argues that Scotland's centralised governance structures have led to an inhibition of local democratic activity:

“Our 32 enormous councils try to do everything - the strategic co-ordination work of a county council and the truly local delivery work of a parish council. It's an impossible task and it's the community level that suffers. Genuinely local simply doesn't exist in Scotland - except where hard-pressed, determined, unfunded, voluntary groups have decided to act and pump life back into their communities.” (Riddoch 2013:196<sup>12</sup>).

Riddoch's claim that community groups are always 'unfunded' does not exactly reflect reality. Since 2008, the CCF “supports communities to tackle climate change by reducing their carbon emissions and increasing their capacity to take action” (Keep Scotland Beautiful, no date). The CCF has funded hundreds of community groups (this is explored in detail in section 3.3) and has significantly impacted on “the production,

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11 Norway, for example, has 431 municipalities with an average population of 11,918 (Riddoch 2013) and an average size of 893 km<sup>2</sup>, while Scotland has 32 local councils, with an average population of 166,490 (Riddoch 2013) and an average size of 2,449 km<sup>2</sup>.

12 It is important to note that Riddoch's analysis was written in the run-up to the Scottish independence referendum, and as such it is a part of a political discourse about governance structures and slippery notions around 'Scottish identity'. However, figures such as the comparisons of municipality sizes at least suggest that there is a discrepancy of between ideals and realities of governance - ideals of strong democratic governance standing in contrast to relatively weak democratic practice, at least if democracy is understood in the light of its Athenian roots, where a high degree of direct representation is regarded as positive.

practice and potential of community in carbon reduction (and) was a game-changer for community in Scotland” (Taylor Aiken 2014:7). One of the CCF's outcomes was that new or previously unfunded groups now could receive Government funding and were now accountable to the funders, with respect to meeting the targets specified when obtaining the funding. Another outcome was the 'rise of community' in Scottish politics and, by extension, the population who came in contact with the community projects that mushroomed across the country.

While sharing many common aspects, the United Kingdom's and Scotland's policy styles retain aspects that are distinct. Endeavours to strengthen communities appear to reflect a trend in an era of austerity in the United Kingdom, where increased political emphases on individuals, families and communities are underpinned by significant cuts in the public service sector. The United Kingdom Government's 'Big Society' policy style appears at first sight to follow a policy style followed in Scotland (Cairney 2011:208), emphasising communities. However, some scholars argue that 'Big Society'-style localism which aims to scale back the state do not improve conditions in hard-pressed areas, and neglects inequalities (Amin 2005; Catney et al. 2014). At the same time, stronger community involvement was part of the Conservative Party's 'Big Society' programme, thought to be a “rhetorical fig-leaf for socially corrosive neo-liberalism” (Corbett & Walker 2013:468). The neoliberal argument holds that if communities take over an increasing number of formerly national services, then the welfare state becomes increasingly obsolete - 'communities' in this context can also mean 'private businesses'.

Riddoch (2013) identified a disjunction between ideals and reality with respect to identity politics of “equality-loving Scots” (30), and the realities of stark inequalities<sup>13</sup> which are especially strongly reflected in the public health literature (see McCartney et al. 2012; 2012a). Given that it has higher mortality rates than other western European countries, Scotland has been dubbed ‘the sick man of Europe’ (McCartney et al. 2012). It has been noted that “Scottish communities who are in the worst [sic] environments tend to be those with least power, because of their poverty, unemployment, isolation or a

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13 The relative inequality within Scotland is one example of the permeability and blurriness of dualistic models of 'wealth' and 'poverty'. In this context, 'inequality' and 'multiple deprivation' are better descriptors than poverty.



combination of these” (Agyeman & Evans 2004:157-8). Scholars have identified several historical reasons for Scotland's stark inequalities, including disproportionate impact of the adoption of neoliberalism across the United Kingdom (McCartney et al. 2012) and -indirectly- ongoing feudal structures of landownership (Wightman 1996). Given this background cocktail of inequalities, deprivation and health issues, welfare cuts would likely result in exacerbating the deeply ingrained issues Scottish society faces. Because welfare is not devolved, welfare cuts made by the British Government inevitably affect Scotland. If Scotland were to distance itself from the British Government's neoliberal approach in the long term, while strengthening communities and support local autonomies, its Government would need to retain the welfare services required for the damage control of existing inequalities. Equally, support for community groups who tackle climate change cannot replace bold, co-ordinated action on climate change the Scottish Government needs to undertake to meet the CCSA's targets.

In the Scottish policy landscape, poverty tends to be measured in relation to the median income of the United Kingdom's population. In Scotland, 19% of the population are classified as being affected by relative poverty (Scottish Government 2015a), whereby 'relative poverty' includes those whose income is below 60% of the United Kingdom's median income (Scottish Government 2013). Out of those who live in relative poverty, in "2012/13, 10 per cent of the population were living in severe poverty, and 4 per cent were living in extreme poverty" (Scottish Government 2015b). Taking various factors such as household sizes and disability-related needs into account, 'severe poverty' is defined as "all those individuals who have household incomes below 50 per cent of the UK median income, [and extreme poverty is defined as] all those individuals who have household incomes below 40 per cent of the UK median income" (Scottish Government 2015c). The sizeable proportion of the Scottish population who lives in relative, severe or extreme poverty suggests that 'common but differentiated responsibilities' in relation to SD-related issues, including tackling climate change, do not only apply internationally, but also within Scotland. Wealthier communities who have the means to consume more, and who accordingly have more leverage to change their consumption-related behaviour patterns, may conceivably carry more responsibility to tackle climate change. However, since participation is a crucial aspect of environmental justice, poorer

communities can benefit from the learning opportunities which emerge through sustainability initiatives, and from the resources which are unleashed through policy initiatives such as the CCF.

Scottish politics are only partially devolved from those of the United Kingdom<sup>14</sup>; therefore some scholars attribute to the Scottish Parliament “varying and limited jurisdictional competence over the policy arenas implicated in the politics of climate change” (McEwen 2010:1). For example, Scotland's obligation for increasing its provision on renewable energy is largely similar to that of England and Wales, and the devolved Government retains some control over aspects of it (McEwen 2010:6). Meanwhile, the Scottish Government has limited influence on the national grid or the allocation of tax revenues, and has limited capacities to participate in international negotiations (McEwen 2010:8). SD was one of the responsibilities devolved to the Scottish Parliament in 1999 (Russell & Thomson 2009:226), which partly explains why a differentiation from the United Kingdom's approach to SD has become part of the identity of Scottish politics. The Scottish Executive has “periodically made public commitments to sustainable development through policy documents” (Russell & Thomson 2009:226). The integration of SD into Scottish politics included a cabinet sub-committee on sustainable Scotland from 2000 until 2007, which was chaired by the First Minister and comprised of finance, transport, communities and enterprise ministers as well as members external to the Government who were considered to be SD experts (Frame & Bebbington 2012:260-1). There was a Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) working for the Westminster Government, with access to the three devolved Governments (Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales), advising all Governments in the different areas relating to SD. The SDC was closed down by these Governments in 2011, and Bebbington and Smith (2011) emphasised in their closing statement to the Scottish Government that the SDC's work had only just begun, and named areas such as slow impact, lack of back-up planning for failure in policy (in particular, climate change policy) and lack of infrastructure for sustainable transport options as weaknesses of the

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14 It is worth noting that the Scottish Government is a relatively young institution. Before Scotland founded its own parliament, the United Kingdom's environmental policy drove regional politics to some extent - not only through the inclusion of SD principles in Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland offices, but also through setting up a separate Environment Agency for Scotland (SEPA) in 1996 (Buller 1998:75) on the basis of a United Kingdom Act of Parliament, the Environment Act 1995.

Scottish Government's SD implementation planning. Another significant milestone was Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy (SSDS) *Choosing Our Future* (2005), which is based on a common framework with the United Kingdom's sustainable development strategy, and has been characterised as populist and action-oriented in approach (Frame & Bebbington 2012: 260-2). Scotland's global contribution to SD, the well-being of Scotland's people, protecting Scotland's natural heritage and resources, and supporting thriving communities are the SSDS's main aims (Scottish Government 2005).

In summary, there have been efforts to integrate SD into Scottish policy, but overall these efforts appeared to lack consistency, integration across different policy areas, and sustained impact. The SDC, which in the SSDS was thought to have “an important role to play in promoting sustainable development in Scotland” (Scottish Government 2005:77), has since its closure not been replaced with an entity which could play an advisory role to the Scottish Government in SD matters. The SSDS is aspirational in its tone but does not provide concrete targets for those aspirations, which is partly reflected in the confinement of SD aspirations to the more comfortable niches, rather than the application of them to more challenging sectors. For example, the public bodies and agencies listed as key players in delivering SD were the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish National Heritage, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Communities Scotland (Scottish Government 2005:84) but not Transport Scotland, the main body with the capacity to reduce Scotland's carbon emissions from transport.

Furthermore, while the CCF's support of community action could be indicative of a decentralisation process, some criticisms of the United Kingdom Government's policy, such as that community participation become instrumentalised for economic and political ends (Amin 2005:617), could also be applied to the CCF's aim to galvanise community participation to tackle climate change. While SD and climate change was a concern of parts of the Scottish population (and, by extension, community groups who applied to the CCF), surveys of the wider public in Scotland indicate that SD is not a high priority among the population. For example, in the Scottish Environmental

Attitudes and Behaviours Survey, responses indicated that environmental concerns are not high on the agenda of the wider public (Davidson et al. 2008). However, when probed directly in relation to environmental themes, most survey respondents do not deny that action is required (Davidson et al. 2008). The impact of climate change is still perceived as a problem by the general population; however, Ipsos Mori (2010) note a decline in popular concern about it. The decline in public interest in SD issues such as climate change is worth noting because it is the backdrop against which CCF-funded community projects operated.

As has been discussed in chapter 2, community empowerment can be socially beneficial – whether community empowerment is a side effect of climate policy, or vice versa. In terms of tackling climate change through community organisations, rather than being limited to a top-down political agenda, the reinvention of community is also a consequence of agents (such as community groups who apply to the CCF) rejecting the notion that global issues such as climate change are for the elite to solve, and instead assuming geographical politics of responsibility (North 2011:1595). At the same time, the responsibility to tackle climate change (and other socio-environmental crises) is carried by all institutions across Scottish society, public and private, differentiated by their respective wealth, power and leverage to effect change. Community groups cannot carry a disproportionate share of this responsibility; greater leverage (and arguably, greater responsibility) lies with institutions who have the power to change infrastructural and economic structures. Furthermore, instrumentalising community groups for the purposes of climate policy can exclude the 'environmentally uninterested' from participating in community projects; hence building community should not be a means to an end, but also be an end in itself. It is important to note that all community groups are not equal. Through a lens of environmental justice, relatively, severely and extremely impoverished communities and individuals carry less responsibility to tackle environmental problems such as climate change, partly because wealthier communities have more opportunities for climate-harming consumption, and accordingly they have more opportunities for changing these harmful consumption patterns. However, relatively impoverished communities can benefit from participating in initiatives around sustainability, as will be highlighted through concrete examples especially in chapter 6.

In conclusion, given Scotland's centralised governance structures and limited devolved powers, the rise of communities in Scotland's political landscape is progressive, but also harbours challenges and pitfalls. Government funding for community projects, such as CCF-funded projects, indicates that the notion of community gains prominence within Scottish politics, but the CCSA's ambitious targets require careful co-ordination of all sectors of society to participate in tackling climate change. Climate change poses risks too serious to offload a national responsibility to small community groups who frequently rely on volunteers. The aims and priorities of community groups need to remain to some extent autonomous and based on local needs for the groups to remain inclusive to all participants, and to take into account existing inequalities. Nevertheless, including the community level in the array of responsible actors to implement SD and climate policy sends out a message of collective responsibility and suggests at least a possibility of decentralisation, even though Scotland's centralised governmental structures currently seem to pose a barrier to these possibilities. After this overview of Scottish climate and sustainability policy, the following section proceeds to introduce the grant body which served as an enabler of community projects, the CCF, with particular reference to its administration and set-up.

### **3.2 Procedural Aspects of the Climate Challenge Fund**

This section explores some unique characteristics of the CCF, and gives an overview of its administration. Furthermore, some outcomes of CCF-projects are explored in terms of their measurability, as well as community benefits beyond the tackling of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions.

The creation of the CCF has its roots in the 2007 general election, when the Scottish National Party formed a minority government and sought the support of the Green

Party, who emphasised sustainable communities in their manifesto (Taylor Aiken 2014). The CCF was launched in 2008, and allocated funding to community groups through competitive application rounds to carry out projects that had carbon emissions reduction as a target. The criteria for groups that were potential recipients of CCF funding were to be “community-led, (to) operate on a not-for-profit basis, (to) prove they can achieve measurable cuts in their carbon footprint within their neighbourhood and (to) leave a sustainable legacy in the community” (Keep Scotland Beautiful 2013). Groups which strived to be formally constituted and communities of interest could also apply (Keep Scotland Beautiful 2013), thus stretching the definition of community by the CCF beyond place-based groups. Through the CCF, the Scottish Government had supported 345 community projects by awarding £37.7 million to successful applicants between 2008 and 2011<sup>15</sup> (Scottish Government 2011).

In a global context, government funds targeting community-level responses to climate change appear to have gained momentum. The Bangladeshi Government signed a contract with the World Bank to support communities in Bangladesh to become more resilient to climate change (World Bank 2012). In parts of Australia, district governments support community sector education (New South Wales Government, 2011). The Australian National Government created a Climate Change Fund, which is to support regional natural resources management (Australian Government 2012). In the United Kingdom, the Big Green Challenge supported community groups across the United Kingdom and was run by Nesta, with the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) supporting some groups (Houghton, 2010); furthermore the DECC has mobilised funds to support green community energy projects (DECC 2011). However, it is apparent from these funds' descriptions that none of them appears to mobilise exclusively public financial resources, and at the same time match the CCF in the degree of freedom which community groups have in designing their own targets and objectives, provided they also meet the funding criterion of reducing emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>. The CCF therefore represents a community grant scheme that is unique to Scotland.

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15 These numbers refer to the time when research was concluded in 2012, and because I generally refer to this period when talking about the CCF, I have continued to do so here for the sake of consistency. By 2015, the CCF had awarded “over £61 million of funding to 696 projects in 512 communities across Scotland” (Scottish Government 2015).

The CCF was administered by contract by the charity Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB). The procedure through which CCF-funding was awarded ran as follows: a) community groups applied to the CCF, b) project applications were summarised by KSB staff, who ranked the strength of the applications as “high”, “medium” or “low”, c) KSB officers then passed on the summaries of each project to an independent Panel who made final allocation decisions. The CCF Panel consisted of volunteers who were considered as possessing a strong track record in the field of sustainability, working as consultants around environmental issues (3), for a conservation charity (1), for a climate change campaigning organisation (1), in town planning and architecture (2), for a council for voluntary organisations (1) and in a local authority (1) (Scottish Government 2011a). The Panel made the decision based on KSB's summaries of the project applications without seeing the original applications. Given that it was unclear how much KSB's summaries and rankings of the projects' applications influenced the final decisions by the Panel, I work on the assumption that decisions regarding the projects' funding were made out of a combination of the judgement and ranking according to certain criteria by both parties, hereafter referred to as 'KSB and the Panel'.

Before applications for CCF round 1 were open, civil servants personally selected four exemplar projects (which did not need to be approved by the Panel). These four projects were 'Going Carbon Neutral Stirling' (run by KSB), 'Barra and Vatersay Northbay Garden Project (Garadh Bhagh a Tuagh)', 'Portobello Energy Descent and Land Reform Group/ Transition Scotland Support', and 'Comrie Carbon Challenge' (Scottish Government 2010). By linking in with existing community groups and personally commissioning them to provide an example to groups who constituted themselves in order to run their first projects with the CCF money, civil servants have acknowledged that citizen activism is worthy of support, and set the tone for the Panel and CCF projects to follow, by personally selecting which projects were to become the CCF's pioneers. The CCF therefore constitutes a case of government-supported citizen activism, with the possibility that this may increase and streamline participation in efforts to achieve climate policy targets at the same time.

Academic studies which explicitly evaluate the procedure and outcomes of the CCF are gradually emerging (see Bolger & Allen 2012; Creamer 2014; Taylor Aiken 2014). The Scottish Government commissioned a review of the scheme by Brook Lyndhurst (2011), who conducted qualitative research into 21 CCF-funded projects and those who collaborate with them<sup>16</sup>, and quantitative carbon assessment in eight of them (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:9). The report presents a comprehensive overview followed by suggestions for improvements, rather than an in-depth analysis of the case studies. Therefore the report's main findings are covered in some depth here, particularly with regard to its carbon assessment of community projects, and to the wider sustainability benefits that Brook Lyndhurst have identified.

Brook Lyndhurst's (2011) report explores the impacts of the projects, their success factors, and the potential of community projects to deliver behaviour change, emissions reductions and wider sustainability benefits. 'Success factors' were defined as the "particular aspects that facilitated changes in participants' behaviour, whether that was an element of the project set up and overall approach, or the use of a particular hook, message or incentive" (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:9). Out of the 21 projects, 12 covered food as a theme in their activities, 16 covered energy efficiency, 7 covered transport, 6 covered energy generation and 6 covered waste, meaning that several projects covered multiple activities.

"Carbon impacts are ... just one part of the equation. Much of the value of community projects lies in their ability to enthuse people about sustainable lifestyles more widely, and to deliver on other aspects of sustainability, such as well-being and community cohesion." (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:3)

The contribution of community projects to carbon emissions reductions was evaluated as "limited" (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:3) in a national context, while the community scale seemed to be one where climate change was meaningful to people.

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16 Brook Lyndhurst did not distinguish between projects that had received CCF-funding, and those who worked closely with a CCF-funded project. For example, a beneficiary of the Be Green project (a project which works alongside and in partnership with the CCF-funded organisation Sustaining Dunbar, but receives its funding from a renewable energy company) was quoted as a participant of Sustaining Dunbar's project, even though they explicitly stated that some of its benefits were due to Be Green (2011:25).



The performance of CCF-funded community projects in terms of their reduction of the emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> can be estimated through more or less exact assessments, resulting in a high degree of uncertainty. No complete data exists with regard to CCF-funded projects' overall CO<sub>2</sub>e reduction to date, but KSB compiled the intended CO<sub>2</sub> emission reductions of individual projects as stated on the successful CCF applications, out of which the total and average CO<sub>2</sub> reduction were compiled for each round (see table 2).

*Table 2: CO<sub>2</sub> Reduction Estimates Per CCF Round*

<b>CCF Round</b>	<b>Total in tonnes (as stated on the applications)</b>	<b>Average savings</b>	<b>Standard deviation of savings for the population</b>
Round 1	41,517	2,966	7,222
Round 2	34,604	1,922	6,092
Round 3	171,978	3,372	7,053
Round 4	34,090	1,033	2,163
Round 5	20,364	551	1,172
Round 6	25,894	647	1,121
Round 7.1	86,986	897	5,263
Round 7.2	3,709	137	264
Round 8	n/a	n/a	n/a

*(Data source: KSB; Calculations: Author's own)*

The average emissions reduction estimate in CCF Round 1 consisted of 2,966 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Round 1 also has the highest standard deviation (7,222 tonnes), indicating that there is a wide-ranging spread between projects indicating low carbon savings and projects indicating high carbon savings. By comparison, Round 6, 7.1 and 7.2 have a combined average of carbon reduction of 560 tonnes. Between the rounds, there appears

to be a decrease in CO<sub>2</sub> reduction estimates the projects intended to deliver when applying for funding. This might be explained through increasingly precise expectations, as community projects learned which carbon reduction estimates were realistically achievable through their project activities. Alternatively, a lower intended delivery of CO<sub>2</sub> reductions could result from a change in types of project activities.

Brook Lyndhurst's assessment includes higher and lower emission reduction estimates per project. Where higher and lower estimates do not differ greatly, they are derived from projects which deliver savings from "hard measures" (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:37) - or activities where carbon savings can be directly calculated, for example before and after the installation of insulation for energy efficiency. However, even with these 'hard measures' there are different figures available for the lifetime of different types of insulation (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:39). The greatest uncertainty<sup>17</sup> with respect to carbon savings lies with 'multi-strand' projects due to the variety of environmental activities promoted by such projects, such as food, transport, energy efficiency and others. The high uncertainty associated with these estimates is due to the uncertainty around the "stickiness" of behaviour change, or the length of time the change of behaviour is thought to last, which would require baseline scenarios and longitudinal research (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:40-1).

Apart from CO<sub>2</sub> reductions, CCF-funded projects contributed to their participants' well-being in terms of improving reported physical health, fitness and mental health (partly through the time spent outdoors by project participants, and partly through aesthetic improvement of the environment - see Brook Lyndhurst 2007:41-3). The development of new skills (such as bicycle repairs, fruit preserving, food growing, chicken care, reuse and recycling ... and composting; Brook Lyndhurst 2011:42) also cannot be measured quantitatively, but can contribute to the adoption of sustainable practices. Projects were also assessed as having contributed to the promotion of behaviour change (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:33-4), and to local economies by using local service suppliers,

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17 The project with the greatest uncertainty was *Going Carbon Neutral Stirling*, which also provoked a media scandal, due to the organisation behind it being Keep Scotland Beautiful, the administrator of the CCF (Herald Scotland 2011). Therefore, out of Brook Lyndhurst's case studies, the multi-stranded project with the highest uncertainty was run by the CCF's own administrator.

and through the jobs created by the CCF-funding itself (43). However, while mentioning the part-time nature of many CCF-funded, project-based jobs, Brook Lyndhurst's (2011) report does not acknowledge that the creation of these jobs is tied to the grant-funding, which meant that the contracts were bound to be short-term and therefore precarious (see chapter 5).

In terms of the CCF's contribution to meeting the targets of Scottish climate policy, Brook Lyndhurst found that the unique contributions communities can make to sustainability goals include a) changing individuals' values and lifestyles in the longer term; b) beginning to change social norms; and c) mobilising communities and building their capacity to address climate change (2011:95). A change of values can lead participants to question consumerism more widely, and norms can be changed by project participants becoming role models, or being "early adopters" (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:96) of certain behaviours such as cycling. In terms of mobilising the wider community, Brook Lyndhurst (2011) found that a community project could mobilise up to a few thousand individuals within their community, whereby top-down approaches appeared to have the most significant impact on behaviour change, and grassroots approaches may enthuse communities without clear evidence of behaviour changes (96). Projects also needed to strike a balance between active engagement methods involving face-to-face contact, which were most effective in engaging participants but also resource-intensive, and passive engagement methods such as communication via mail, which are less effective but reach a larger audience (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:105). Brook Lyndhurst's findings indicate that every community project was a trade-off. For example, some were easier to evaluate and focused on measurable activities such as energy efficiency measures, and thereby addressed climate change in a more straightforward manner. Meanwhile, other projects focused on 'enthusing' participants and operating a range of sustainability-related activities which were less clear-cut in terms of their measurability. Brook Lyndhurst did not analyse further why projects adopted such different approaches, and to what extent a community organisation's *modus operandi* reveals something about the demographic composition of the community group and the place in which it works. These questions are addressed in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Characteristics of community projects were also influenced by the way the CCF was conceptualised by its administration. For example, the Scottish Government's pre-selection of 'exemplary projects' conveys the notion civil servants had of 'communities' when they designed CCF criteria, but also ensured that the Scottish Government had a say in what CCF-funded project 'ought to look like'. These projects included locations on the Isle of Barra, a geographically defined community, and on community-owned land purchased under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act in Comrie, as well as taking a loose approach of “engaging with the public, businesses and communities across the Stirling area (with a population of around 90,000)” (Scottish Government 2010). Furthermore, civil servants attempted to support communities wishing to adopt the Transition model by supporting the founding of a country-wide support organisation, which can distribute the resources and 'how-to' guides for community resilience made available by the Transition Network in Totnes, Devon. I interviewed two civil servants within the Scottish Government, two administrators of KSB and one Panel member for my Masters of Research dissertation (Meyerricks 2010a), which revealed that from the CCF-administrators' point of view, the CCF was regarded to be an innovative scheme of distributing Government funding to community groups.

“The learning process of the administrators ... included a divergence from more traditional ways of monitoring [government-funded projects], which produced to some extent increased levels of trust in the capacities of community groups, many of whom they have visited:

'That's been quite a big exercise in understanding how not to manage that risk by piling lots of red tape on people – because one of the instincts is to say, we'll manage it really closely, we'll get really close to these people and we'll pour over any invoice, and advise them 'do this, do that' and micro-manage them. So it's been an exercise of stepping back from that and going, what are the real risks of some people really running away with the money, and just allowing people to get on with it, but putting a framework of support around it that is there if they need it.' [Civil Servant]

While the CCF focuses predominantly on reducing carbon emissions within communities and inducing corresponding behaviour change, ... the building of community was considered [to be an important] effect of the fund. Among the CCF beneficiaries, a diversity of approaches and prior relationships to local community groups were seen as leading to success, so the [CCF] administrators emphasised that they were 'comfortable' to see not obviously climate change related activities happening as part of the projects" (Meyerricks 2010a:20).

Interview responses from the CCF administration confirmed the findings of the Brook Lyndhurst report that while the CCF focuses predominantly on reducing carbon emissions within communities and inducing behaviour change, the building of community was considered an important effect of the fund. Taylor Aiken (2014) wrote that "through CCF use of community as a vague, loosely defined sense of positive locality, they smuggle in a coercive, narrow, silently assumed vision of community: topological, territorial, local, rural and reified" (6). Indeed, while communities of practice also qualified to apply (Keep Scotland Beautiful, no date-a), all of the initial exemplary projects were either connected to a community of place or, in the case of the Transition project, promoted place-based community groups.

To sum up the section, the CCF was an innovative scheme by the Scottish Government insofar as it was part of mitigation-oriented climate policy targets and was fully publicly funded, and still allowed community groups some leverage in the design of the projects. In practice, while it was not a required outcome, adaptation measures in the form of increasing community resilience almost appeared to be a more significant outcome among some CCF-funded groups (see chapter 6). Brook Lyndhurst (2011) gave an overview for differing strategies employed by community projects, but did not analyse in depth how and why particular characteristics of community projects have emerged. My approach in this thesis involves case studies, and the next section describes how these were chosen from the hundreds of community groups that ran active CCF-funded projects.

### 3.3 Community Projects Funded by the Climate Challenge Fund

In order to gain in-depth insights of narratives within CCF-funded community projects, a case studies approach was adopted. The rationale of this approach in relation to the research methodology is laid out in chapter 4. To choose community projects for the case studies, I needed to identify CCF-funded community projects which were potentially well suited to generating the data relevant to the research questions. In this section I describe some characteristics of CCF-funded community projects on the basis of which I chose the case studies (described in chapter 4).

The CCF had already been distributing grants for three years prior to the design of this research project, the fieldwork for which took place during round 8 of the CCF in 2011. The data to describe the project characteristics of rounds 1 – 8 (see table 3) was taken from an internal spreadsheet made available by KSB officers.

*Table 3: Average Funding per CCF-funded Community Project*

	<b>Total funding (£)</b>	<b>Number of projects</b>	<b>Average funding per project (£)</b>
<b>CCF rounds 1-8</b>	26,076,307	447	64,997

*(Data source: KSB; Calculations: Author's own)*

The average amount of funding per CCF-project was approximately £65,000. However, it needs to be taken into account that some community organisations applied for funding to run a smaller scoping project, such as a feasibility study, and then possibly applied for a consecutive round of CCF-funding to run the CCF-project whose feasibility had been explored. Therefore, if one would exclude feasibility studies, the average amount of funding a community organisation received to run a CCF-project would have been higher.

The characteristics of CCF-projects varied between the first round in 2008 and the seventh round in March 2011 (see table 4). Variations between CCF rounds concerned primarily the number of projects funded, the length of projects, their demographics regarding their 'Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation' (SIMD<sup>18</sup>) deciles and urban/ rural classifications, the length of projects (over one year or less), and estimations of carbon emissions reduction as stated in the applications. However, I did not include the length of projects in the analysis, because in some rounds, up to half of the projects did not name either their start or their end date, and given these gaps, no meaningful conclusions could be drawn from the data. When analysing the demographics of successful applicants to the CCF, I combined the two lower, the two middle, and the two upper sextiles of the Scottish Government's urban/ rural classification. KSB categorised the postal code of each successful CCF applicant according to its SIMD decile, which helps to assess how evenly CCF-funding is distributed across wealthier and more deprived areas. Each aspect of table 4 is discussed in the following paragraphs.

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18 The SIMD scale shows levels of deprivation in small areas in relation to other areas in Scotland.

“The SIMD divides Scotland into 6,505 small areas, called datazones, each containing around 350 households. The Index provides a relative ranking for each datazone, from 1 (most deprived) to 6,505 (least deprived). By identifying small areas where there are concentrations of multiple deprivation, the SIMD can be used to target policies and resources at the places with greatest need.” (Scottish Government 2012)

In determining how a particular area fares in the SIMD, the index takes the following contributing aspects into account: health, safety, education, employment, housing and access to services, as well as financial aspects (Scottish Government 2012).

*Table 4: Demographic Characteristics of CCF-funded Projects in Rounds 1-8*

CCF Round (date of Panel meeting)	Number of projects funded	SIMD decile (mean)	SIMD decile (standard deviation)	% urban areas	% town areas	% rural areas
1 (17/09/2008 )	14	4.86	1.36	35.71	28.57	35.71
2 (04/11/2008 )	18	5.61	1.25	44.44	27.77	27.77
3 (15/01/2009 )	51	5.51	3.53	13.72	13.72	72.55
4 (07/04/2009 )	33	5.82	1.62	54.55	6.06	39.39
5 (02/09/2009 )	37	5.22	1.73	48.65	5.41	45.95
6 (03/12/2009 )	40	6.18	2.65	27.50	32.50	40.00
7.1 (31/03/2010 )	97	5.81	2.65	40.21	7.22	52.58
7.2 (15.6.2010)	27	5.70	1.42	37.04	14.81	48.15
8 (22/03/2011 )	130	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<b>Total: 447</b>	<b>Mean: 5.59</b>	<b>Mean: 1.7</b>	<b>Mean: 37.73</b>	<b>Mean: 17.01</b>	<b>Mean: 45.26</b>

*(Data source: KSB; Calculations: Author's own)*

In table 4, variations in the funding allocated to the projects over consecutive rounds are identified in terms of the mean and the standard deviation to highlight variations in the distribution of funds. It should be noted that KSB had compiled data for each successful application in each funded round of the CCF, but not for the rejected applications. It follows that any patterns emerging in the data reflected a combination of the CCF administrators' choices and community groups that had applied, while leaving out those whose applications had not been successful. In addition to the exclusion of data about rejected applications, the data has numerous gaps, with information particularly about round 8 being incomplete<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> Given that the case studies (as discussed in chapter 4) were chosen from round 8, the KSB data relates to the period before my fieldwork period (2011-2012), but does not include it.

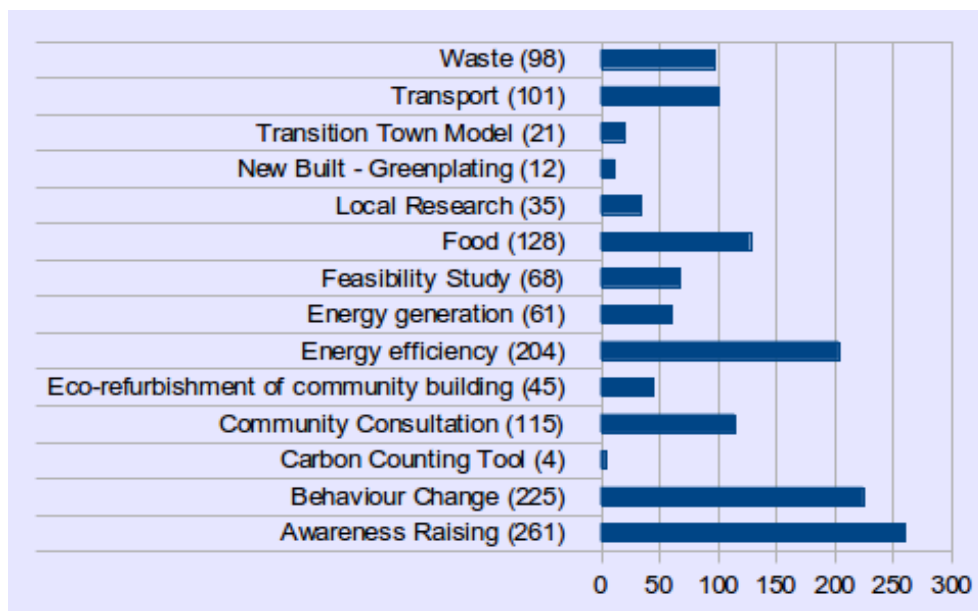


The Scottish Government's urban/rural sextile scale distinguishes between 1) large urban areas, 2) other urban areas, 3) accessible small towns, 4) remote small towns, 5) accessible rural areas and 6) remote rural areas. However, I combined the local authority areas in which CCF projects are located into three categories: urban, towns and rural (the reason for combining the areas was related to the case studies selection process; see chapter 4). While there was no obvious trend across the first 8 CCF rounds, the lowest percentage of projects (around 17%) were located in towns. Around 37% of projects were located in urban areas, and around 45% of projects were located in rural areas. While this data is skewed by the 'Community Power Down Consortium', which was a joint application between a number of rural projects which were nevertheless included separately in the KSB data, there are compelling reasons to believe that the most rural areas have the highest numbers of CCF projects per capita. The 'Community Power Down Consortium' skews the data in CCF Round 3, where through it around 73% of the projects were placed in rural locations.

The SIMD's data highlights inequalities in Scotland, where 51% of income is received by the top three deciles (8-10), 35% of income is received by the middle four deciles (4-7), and 14% of income is received by the bottom three deciles (1-3) (Scottish Government 2012). The SIMD decile's mean lies slightly above five in every CCF round apart from round 1, where it lies slightly under five. This indicates that the average (mean) CCF-project was located in a data zone's categorised as slightly above average in terms of its affluence - or, within the SIMD's narrative, slightly below average in terms of a data zone's deprivation. It follows that CCF-funding to some extent reproduced patterns of existing inequalities, by funding slightly more projects in areas which were already more affluent, although this pattern was not statistically analysed. This recognition provided an incentive to include narratives of inequality both in the research design and analysis, by choosing case studies which reflected inequalities in Scotland to some extent.

In addition to demographical variations, the types of activities adopted by projects varied. KSB pre-established categories of project activities in the application process,

whereby a community organisation could choose to cover up to fourteen activities, which were listed on the application form, as part of a CCF-project. Among the successful applications, the highest number of projects planned to engage in awareness raising (261), followed by behaviour change (225) and energy efficiency (204). Food (128) was also a popular topic, followed by community consultation (115), transport (101) and waste (98). Feasibility studies (68), energy generation (61) and eco-refurbishment of community buildings (45) were covered to some extent; local research (35), the Transition town model (21) and new built (12) to a lesser extent. A very small number of projects used the carbon counting tool (4). This distribution is reflected in illustration 2.



*Illustration 2: Types of Activities, All Projects Round 1 – 7.2*

*(Data source: KSB [round 8 n/a]; Calculations: Author's own)*

The low uptake of KSB's carbon counting tools is perhaps surprising, due to the CCF's focus on carbon emission reduction, but on the other hand it shows that an overly explicit focus on carbon reduction may not be the most popular activity with community projects. The relatively low number of Transition initiatives is perhaps also surprising, given that among the Scottish Government's four exemplar projects funded prior to CCF Round 1, there was a national organisation aiming to promote the Transition town model.

The kinds of activities projects undertook, which were inevitably linked to their locations and target audiences, may have had a significant influence on expected figures of carbon savings. Since awareness raising was the most widespread activity, it was clear that educational values featured strongly among CCF-projects. RQ2 inquired into different ways in which community projects facilitate learning among project participants; therefore, the two main case studies chosen were 'multi-strand projects' (Brook Lyndhurst 2011) which undertook a variety of activities.

Overall, the KSB data suggests that 'typical' CCF projects do not exist, due to variations in project demographics, amounts of funding and project lengths, as well as the diversity of activities offered by projects. A strong methodological focus on narratives in the empirical chapters (5-7) aims to highlight subtleties and differences within the case studies. Furthermore, this section gave an overview of CCF characteristics in order to frame the process of choosing the case studies, which is discussed in the next chapter, alongside the methodological rationale for the case studies approach.

This chapter served to frame these particular narratives through an exploration of the CCF in its breadth and role as enabler of community projects in Scotland, contextualised as part of global political processes around climate change. While the empirical chapters (5, 6 & 7) portray close-ups of CCF-funded community projects and, to some extent, the community organisations who were running them, the CCF as an entity becomes a background narrative, while the notion of community projects and their role in social change processes comes to the fore. In the next chapter, I discuss the research methods which form the backbone of the empirical part of this study.

# **CHAPTER FOUR - Methods for Researching Community Projects, and Rationales for a Transdisciplinary Methodology in Sustainable Development**

## **4.0 Introduction**

*“Whether our concern is to inhabit this world or to study it - and at root these are all the same, since all inhabitants are students and all students inhabitants - our task is not to take stock of its contents but to follow what is going on, tracing the multiple trails of becoming, wherever they lead.” (Ingold 2011:14)*

This chapter gives an overview of the philosophical underpinnings of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research methodologies and methods emerging in SD research in general, and in this research project in particular. Challenges around transdisciplinarity and participation are explored in the context of research for a PhD thesis. Underlying epistemologies are discussed – those of SD in general, and those within SD for the production of socially robust knowledge which takes into account different types of knowledge, in particular scientific knowledge, lay epistemology and local knowledges – whereby the latter two overlap. An epistemology of participation tends to be rooted in phenomenological accounts of knowledge production, which have shaped the methodological approach of this study. The rationales for the research methods are discussed, which primarily consisted of participant observation and semi-structured interviewing. Following on from this, the rationale for choosing a case study approach is discussed, and the process of choosing the case studies.

## **4.1 Towards a Transdisciplinary Research Methodology**

Research in SD seeks to formulate analyses of, and solutions to, contemporary problems related to humanity's impact on the earth's life support systems. Accordingly, the SD researcher's task largely consists of the integration of various disciplines or kinds of knowledge in order to distil an analysis which can form a basis for problem-solving in SD, and for policy recommendations. Research approaches in SD are often characterised as interdisciplinary (see White 2013; Franklin & Blyton 2011) or transdisciplinary (see Klein 2008; Brown et al. 2010; Aslin & Blackstock 2010). In the following paragraphs I describe why my approach to research is transdisciplinary and generalist, in the sense that it is informed by and synthesises theories and research from different disciplines to inform my own research practice. Then the notion of participation, which is also closely associated with transdisciplinarity, is explored in some detail.

Research in SD tends to be associated with interdisciplinarity (Klein 1990; O'Brien et al. 2013; Schäfer 2008; White 2013); however, definitions of interdisciplinarity vary in the literature. Interdisciplinarity is much older than disciplinary divisions, which came about with the increasing importance of the natural sciences in the 19th century (Klein 1990; Max-Neef 2005). The re-emergence of interdisciplinarity is said to be a reaction to excessive segregation of knowledge: "in the shift towards 'atomistic multiplicity', the tree of knowledge has become magnificently brachiated" (Klein 1990:22). The simplest definition of interdisciplinarity is that of "a synthesis of two or more disciplines, establishing a new level of discourse" (Choi et al. 2006:355). More specifically, Klein has narrowed down interdisciplinarity to a) borrowing, b) solving problems, c) increased consistency of subjects or methods, and d) the emergence of an interdiscipline (1990:64). The study of SD can be termed such an interdiscipline, while Klein acknowledges that the magnitude of achieving synthesis has been underestimated in the literature (1990:116). Interdisciplinarity in its most straightforward sense, that of a co-operation of disciplines, is applied within SD research, because the complex problems addressed in SD are not usually done justice to within disciplinary boundaries, and

usually require teams of researchers from different disciplines to work together (Schäfer 2008:25). However, some definitions of interdisciplinarity emphasise synthesis more than others and go beyond an amalgamation of different disciplines; here the whole becomes more than the sum of its parts. White describes principles of SD research as typically consisting of a combination (but not necessarily encompassing all elements) of interdisciplinarity, participation, co-production, building capacity and awareness, and contributing to theory while having local impact and global relevance, synthesising different forms of knowledge, encouraging reflection, and linking with teaching and learning (2013:168). White's (2013) definition describes an 'ideal-case scenario', or an ethos SD researchers are invited to strive for. In this research project, I have achieved some of these principles more than others, as outlined in the following paragraphs.

An interdisciplinary framework raises questions about how knowledge is produced and evaluated, especially when drawing upon areas where the methods lie outwith the expertise of the SD researcher. Different forms of knowledge include, for example, academic, practitioner and local ways of knowing, "each imbued with different powers and cultural significances" (O'Brien et al. 2013:52). These ways of knowing can be further differentiated within the different forms, for example through methodological differences within academia. The potential to collaborate with other researchers is limited within the parameters of a PhD thesis, but drawing from different disciplines strengthens the framing of the research questions and subsequent analytic rigour. Critical evaluation and reflection of peer-reviewed literature is clustered around the themes addressed by the research questions; hence chapter 2 reflects upon the main themes and different bodies of literature anchored in different disciplines, which are revisited in the empirical chapters and later synthesised in the reflection around liminality. I draw upon literature associated with disciplines such as social anthropology, social psychology and human geography. While research in SD typically crosses the boundaries of disciplines, SD research remains informed by the disciplinary backgrounds and epistemological starting points of the researcher (Franklin & Blyton 2011:6), which in my case are social anthropology and philosophy, the first joint degree I earned. As a trained social scientist, my capacity to critically evaluate studies in the natural sciences is limited, so the peer-reviewed nature of reputable research serves as a

primary validation mechanism. Especially in chapter 2, I draw upon climate science primarily from the IPCC's (2013) fifth assessment report, which is in itself interdisciplinary. The IPCC assessment reports are vetted by many experts in the field and present “a massive exercise in social knowledge building, of which scenarios are only one part” (Lloyd & Schweizer 2014:2050). IPCC assessment reports are not infallible, but through their consensus-building processes they achieve a wider scope than individual studies in the field of climate science; the reports should therefore be regarded as the 'state of the art' in climate science.

Interdisciplinarity is not the only way of integrating disciplinary fields to arrive at new forms of knowledge. Another distinct but related body of integrating disciplines is the literature around transdisciplinarity. There are different definitions of transdisciplinarity, some of which overlap with conceptualisations of interdisciplinarity, while others remain more distinct. Klein (1990) distinguishes interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity by arguing that the latter is far more comprehensive in scope and vision (65) by breaking through disciplinary ranges and barriers, and “disobeying the rules of disciplinary etiquette” (Miller in Klein 1990:66). Two distinct notions of transdisciplinarity emerge from the literature. Firstly, transdisciplinarity may be characterised by stakeholder participation in the research (Klein 2008) and the inclusion of local knowledge (Brown et al. 2010:4), whereby the extent of stakeholder involvement may vary between different research projects (Schäfer 2008:26). Secondly, transdisciplinarity is conceptualised as a more integrated, holistic knowledge culture (Aslin & Blackstock 2010). I proceed to unpack both of these notions in the following paragraphs.

The first notion of transdisciplinarity, around stakeholder participation, overlaps with the field of participatory research approaches, especially where a requirement of transdisciplinary processes is “that all participants contribute in a mutual learning process on equal footing” (Seidl et al. 2012:9). 'Participation' has a number of different meanings in research theory. In SD, it typically refers to shaping policy in the public interest by involving people outside formal governmental institutions in decision-making processes (Baker 2006:43-4). One strand of participation is connected to social

and popular movements with political aims (Stiefel & Wolfe 2011:27). Participation can refer to methods which have evolved from participatory action research (PAR). PAR usually involves “community-based study, co-operative enquiry, action science and action learning” (Koshy 2011:1). In this context, participation is sometimes criticised for being vulnerable to being watered down if employed within existing power relations (Leal 2011) - for example, a researcher is part of a higher education system with access to research grants and the prestige that comes from publications, and will retain this power while conducting participatory research with groups of people who may not hold the same powers.

Notions of interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity that emphasise stakeholder involvement and local knowledge are congruent with the underlying ethos of participatory research methods, where researchers strive to critique the distance between the researcher and the researched (Tandon 2011:88) with the ultimate purpose for research to become a collaborative process. One of the first questions to be raised about participation is who participates in what (Chambers 2011) - the 'researched' can participate in the research process, the researcher can actively participate in the groups which are the target of research, or the researcher can adopt a participatory positionality which reflects a shared ethos between the 'researcher' and the 'researched'.

a) Participation of the 'researched' in the research process: Researchers may develop the research design in collaboration with the 'researched'. As a result, the research process involves co-production of knowledge (White 2013) between researchers and the 'researched'.

b) Participation of the researcher in the groups or organisations that are being researched: Researchers may either already have been involved in the groups prior to beginning the research, or they may join the group and take part in their activities. The researcher may thus adopt the role of an insider (peer) and outsider (researcher) at the same time.

c) Participatory ethos: Researchers may share values and aims held by the individuals



or organisations researched; for example, strong SD's underlying values about nature, human relationships, and so on (Baker 2006:42) may be held by the researcher, who enters the research process as a proponent of SD and relates to research participants accordingly.

Prior to this research project, I had forged links and built relationships within environmental movements and community projects, which helped in most cases to facilitate a rapport with my interviewees, as we shared a common frame of reference (Valentine 2005:113), or had other advantageous effects such as easy access to gatekeepers during the preliminary study. However, my positionality will also have affected the kind of data gathered in some cases, where informants would have interacted with me in the knowledge that I had a background in environmental activism, which could have coloured their responses. A sensitivity to the sites of research, or a “baseline awareness of the individual and collective characteristics of research participants and their space of practice” (Franklin & Blyton 2011:7), was crucial to developing mutual trust. The practice space of community projects was to benefit directly from the research process, not only in uncertain, indirect ways from the findings, but through concrete contributions (see section 4.3). However, this study has not fulfilled PAR characteristics of knowledge co-production or opening up the research design to the research participants. With my background as an environmental campaigner and active involvement in the projects according to their targets, 'participant observation', while it described my research methods, did not fully capture my approach to the fieldwork: a 'participatory ethos' was underlying my participant observation practice.

The second notion of transdisciplinarity (which overlaps more with interdisciplinarity, according to some definitions) is concerned with systems thinking, complexity and uncertainty. According to Klein, the earliest definition of transdisciplinary is that of “a common axiom that transcends separate disciplinary perspectives, exemplified by the overarching syntheses of general systems and ecology” (2008:117). Similarly, Choi et al. define transdisciplinarity as providing “holistic schemes that subordinate disciplines, looking at the dynamics of whole systems” (2006:355). Expanding on the holistic

aspirations of transdisciplinarity in more specific ways, Max-Neef writes that transdisciplinarity combines “a) levels of reality, b) the principle of the 'included middle', and, c) complexity” (Max-Neef 2005:10), whereby the “included middle” refers to moving beyond binaries (simultaneously A and non-A). While Max-Neef's notion of the 'included middle' refers to logic within research methodologies, for the purposes of this thesis it is perhaps best seen as challenging dualisms such as 'nature' and 'culture', for an integration of social and ecological systems, or scientific and local knowledge, which avoids an emphasis of superiority of one over the other (Pretty 2011). While stakeholder participation and the integration of local knowledge is seen by some to be characteristic of interdisciplinarity (e.g. O'Brien et al. 2008) and is thus not unique to transdisciplinarity; the holistic aspiration of transdisciplinarity (in some definitions) is perhaps its most distinct characteristic.

The overlap between definitions of 'interdisciplinarity' and 'transdisciplinarity' muddies the distinctions between the two terms. I suggest that the two concepts are best regarded as sitting on a spectrum, with the former being more explicitly rooted in integrating disciplinary knowledge within academia, while the latter emphasises systems thinking by describing more holistic syntheses of theories, concepts and empirical research. By putting a systemic social-ecological embeddedness of community projects at the heart of this thesis through the concept of liminality, I strive towards transdisciplinarity in my analysis. However, because the literature review and the empirical part of the thesis is clustered around themes, some sections tend to be more interdisciplinary than transdisciplinary, in the sense that the theoretical framing relies more strongly on disciplinary knowledges from, for example, social anthropology, human geography or social psychology. Especially at the stage of analysis, I strive towards transdisciplinarity in the sense of emphasising holistic perspectives on the research topics in question. I combined an analysis of tasks and values within community projects (see chapter 6), and framed the data through a systemic account of wider biospheric trends, and community projects' place within them (chapters 2 & 7). This wider context provides meaning (Bateson 1979:15) to the case studies, instead of regarding them as a 'local' or even a 'Scottish' occurrence alone. The CCF's framing of community projects tackling global issues (climate change) makes them part of wider processes of “glocalisation”

(Swyngedouw 2004). I could have strengthened the transdisciplinary analysis by including, for example, historical reasons for existing inequalities, land ownership rights, or the timing of the fieldwork in the run-up to the Scottish independence referendum. While prioritising a case study approach and contemporary analysis is appropriate from a perspective of SD's contemporary problem-solving approach, it is important to note that certain temporal and spatial dimensions have been left out (with exception of chapter 4, where a historical dimension to the rise of communities in Scotland is touched on).

In summary, the need for a transdisciplinary approach to research in SD arises from its contested, value-laden issues which require a transdisciplinary process between science and society (Seidl et al. 2012). Transdisciplinarity, or synthesis-focused interdisciplinarity according to O'Brien et al.'s (2013) definition, allows for description of nonlinear complexity. This is not to say that disciplinary knowledges and interdisciplinary syntheses do not have their place. Reductionist, focused ways of 'doing science' - including social sciences - have led to levels of specialisation which have enabled, for example, climate modelling.

“It goes without saying (evidences are clear) that linear logic and reductionism have contributed to our reaching unsuspected levels of knowledge. The knowing has grown exponentially, but only now we begin to suspect that that may not be sufficient, not for quantitative reasons, but for qualitative reasons. Knowledge is only one of the roads, only one side of the coin. The other road, the other side of the coin, is that of understanding.” (Max-Neef 2005:14-5)

In this thesis, I aim to connect the dots between the community projects (explored through case studies, as discussed in section 4.3) and the vulnerable complex systems in which they are situated. For research in SD, moving towards a transdisciplinary methodology means, in Klein's (1990) terms, to conceive of the brachiated tree of knowledge as a whole tree instead of separate branches by integrating different ways of knowing and contextualising each research question within the wider systems SD is concerned with. The next section undertakes a reflection on the underlying kinds of

knowledge within SD, and by extension within sustainability research, to mark pathways towards arriving at an understanding in Max-Neef's sense.

## **4.2 'Critical Sustainable Development', or Why Different Kinds of Knowledge Matter for Sustainability Research**

The following section outlines my own position with regards to SD as a principle informing my research approach and analysis. SD has been used in diverse contexts, and requires careful definition in order to convey what it refers to. The term 'sustainability', for example, can be strong or weak in its conceptualisation. While 'weak sustainability' refers to the exclusive importance of 'man-made' [sic] stock to be passed on to future generations, in 'strong sustainability' natural capital is non-substitutable (Neumayer 2003). My own conceptualisation of sustainability is 'strong'; beyond that I aim to integrate different kinds of knowledge rooted in systems thinking in order to situate the case studies in wider SD discourses. These discourses include, for example, Bateson's (1979) notion of a 'pattern that connects', and sustainability science which places a stronger emphasis on integration of different knowledge than SD. Ultimately my own position with regard to these theoretical approaches is best described in terms of 'critical SD', which retains a notion of SD as an interdiscipline with problem-solving at its heart, while questioning some of the underlying linear notions of 'development' on which SD is based.

The environmental and social problems that SD addresses tend to be of a complex, 'wicked' (Rittel & Webber 1973) nature. It is only possible to develop conflicting, partial solutions to evolving problems. The socioeconomic-ecological issues SD addresses are best described as non-linear - closer to systems science and chaos theory than to linear notions of development. Bateson (1979) proposed the notion of a 'pattern that connects'

to describe relationships between biological organisms - patterns of (singular) organisms are connected within themselves, or first-order connections, but connections between organisms - second-order connections- make up wider patterns, or a “metapattern” (11). Bateson's patterned world is non-linear, describing “thinking in terms of stories” (1979:13) which are shared between minds and form ecological systems. Non-linear, systemic analyses or stories may also be mixed with more positivist, 'linear' science. For example, climate change is generally studied by geoscientists whose methods involve computer modelling of future climate systems, based on clues found in the earth's fossil record ('linear' in time). However, the anthropogenic causes of climate change are social, economic, psychological, political and technical and may be studied by social scientists from a variety of disciplines. The underpinning epistemologies of the natural and social sciences, but also of the disciplines making up these sciences, differ in some cases profoundly. 'Hard' observations, and factual knowledge that is likely to have a profound impact on the organisation of our social and natural systems, gain an ethical dimension, where action is required to prevent the predicted impacts of climate change that were to threaten the planet's life support systems.

How do narratives of patterns relate to particular issues in SD, for example, climate change? Firstly, the scientific foundations of SD serve as guiding principles - scientific knowledge is robust precisely because it changes when a theory is falsified by contradicting evidence, resulting in what Kuhn (1970) called 'paradigm shifts'. The high probability of climate change happening as a result of human fossil fuels consumption is accepted within the international scientific community as plausibly real and a guiding principle for action (IPCC 2007). The IPCC's policy recommendations are based on the accumulated evidence and relational processes of knowledge production: the writing team of the IPCC 2013 consisted of sixty-three authors and ten review editors. Through the policy recommendations, and the extent to which governments follow these or not, climate change becomes a political issue, and may be overridden by short-term economic incentives or long-term global power imbalances. International and national political institutions have reacted to the challenge of climate change to some extent and have put some measures into place to reduce their emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>e. However, if the

success of international efforts to tackle climate change is to be measured in terms of reaching a robust international agreement which is likely to result in a co-ordinated reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>e in the time frame needed to prevent runaway climate change, then these efforts can so far be regarded as a failure (Smead et al. 2014). Scientific knowledge with regard to climate change is not adequately reflected in the actions of a) governments or b) the public to suggest that scientific knowledge is perceived to matter or be important to the way societies are run. However, it is not only the strained relationship between scientific knowledge and political action (Ascher et al. 2010) that creates tensions. The complex 'wickedness' of climate change means that the scale of the issue is only knowable in abstract ways. Climate scientists, who have access to the appropriate tools and instruments, can detect the increase of GHGs and perceive the theoretical threats (Kirkman 2007:26), while those who do not have access to these tools must rely on their capacity to discern which information to trust.

"Global climate change is a theoretical threat par excellence in that even its symptoms are hidden. If it were not for the various media by which scientific knowledge is conveyed to the public, I would have had no idea that the air that I breathe now contains 31 percent more carbon dioxide than the air breathed by my eighteenth-century ancestors, and I would not have known that the sea level has been rising steadily by about a millimetre a year." (Kirkman 2007:26)

Lay persons, or people who have not been trained in scientific thinking or choose to reject it, construct their own subjective experience and meaning-making. Lay people also choose whether to accept or reject climate science, or the scientific consensus on various other topics. Subjective experience forms a field of knowledge sometimes called lay epistemology, where negotiated meanings are created in interaction with each other (Holdaway 2000:163). Lay epistemology is intimately connected to local knowledge and public preferences, and the relationship of these kinds of knowledge to rejecting or accepting political decisions. It may or may not be 'non-linear' knowledge, whereby emotive or experiential knowledge mingles with knowledge about cause-and-effect. Insights from ethnoecology suggest that clashing or different epistemologies with regard to the conceptualisations of ecology by various stakeholders in environmental

issues such as resource use can lead to conflict (Haenn 1999). One further distinction of different kinds of knowledge is derived from the binaries of theory and practice, which -while not mutually exclusive- are best conceived of as 'ways of knowing', divided into skills-based knowledge and theoretical knowledge (Harris 2007). Harris summarised this distinction as follows:

“('Knowing how') is the knowledge of a skill, how to put something into action; it is tacit and situation-dependent, performative and non-propositional. 'Knowing that' is propositional knowledge (theoretical or factual), since it conveys meaning, is based on rules and laws, and is not dependent on context.” (Harris 2007:3)

Based on Harris' distinction between propositional and non-propositional knowledge, hereafter I use the term 'knowledges' where referring to both kinds of knowledge, or an uncertain relationship between the kinds of knowledge. For example, SD can be practised and climate change counteracted without having digested the propositional, theoretical knowledge which underlies the need for action. On the other hand, non-propositional knowledge about climate change can be held while putting few, if any, counteracting measures into practice. Even for the scientifically literate, some degrees of dissonance between propositional and non-propositional knowledges is bound to be the case. For any individual who lives in an unsustainable society, it might be impossible to participate in this society while keeping personal CO<sub>2</sub>e within the safe limits (defined by IPCC targets), even in the presence of non-propositional knowledge about climate change and ways to mitigate it.

While epistemologies are an important aspect in disagreements and conflicts, underlying power imbalances play an important role as well. Research which aims to find social solutions to environmental problems, and environmental solutions to social problems (for example, preventing the widespread suffering likely to occur as a result of runaway climate change) must integrate social, psychological and ecological patterns and relationships not only between people, but between institutions and cultural contexts, taking inequalities and power imbalances into account. It appears that the way in which sustainability science, according to Bebbington and Larrinaga's (2014)

definition, places greater emphasis on integration and systemic analysis than SD, mirrors the way in which transdisciplinarity (according to the definition I spelled out in the previous section) places greater emphasis on integration and synthesis than interdisciplinarity. However, the term 'science' in 'sustainability science' carries its own share of baggage, which differs from that of 'development' as elaborated on in chapter 2. 'Science' could be seen as suggesting an “entrenched scientific normative baseline” (Wynne 2014:16) which may alienate public perceptions by suggesting an implicit marginalisation of local knowledges. 'Development' is in itself a contested term which carries baggage in linear and top-down practices.

"Wherever one looked, one found the repetitive and omnipresent reality of development: governments designing and implementing ambitious development plans, institutions carrying out development programs in city and countryside alike, experts of all kinds studying underdevelopment and producing theories ad nauseam. The fact that most people's conditions not only did not improve but deteriorated with the passing of time did not seem to bother most experts. Reality, in sum, had been colonized by the development discourse, and those who were dissatisfied with this state of affairs had to struggle for bits and pieces of freedom within it, in the hope that in the process a different reality could be constructed" (Escobar 1995:5)

Development, with its connotation of top-down government interventions, is essentially a practice-based field, and using the term suggests practical aspirations. Another way of arriving at a notion of SD with an explicitly holistic aspiration which takes power dynamics into account is to conceive of 'critical SD', which I explore in the following paragraphs in relation to my own position as a researcher.

As a researcher, my positionality is not one of cultural relativism, as I accept the main problem narratives posed by sustainability scholars and natural scientists observing changes in the earth's climate, biodiversity, and stocks of natural resources. At the same time, I emphasise how important it is to include and take seriously multiple voices and meaning-making. Climate change, and many other issues related to SD such as the loss of biodiversity or social inequality, are frequently framed in the literature as 'wicked



problems' that are persistent and insoluble, and symptomatic of deeper problems (Frame 2008). A philosophical framework to tackling 'wicked problems' is conceived as one that rejects pure behaviourism and expands its ontological commitment to "the objective physical world, the inner subjective world of the individual, and the cultural sphere of the normative social world" (Russell 2010:52). As a researcher in SD, I engage on all those levels: I work within a scientific worldview which accepts the high probabilities of climate science as framing the overall inquiry. On the other hand, the focus of my analysis in this research project is on the local knowledges and lay understanding produced by the community groups during the execution of CCF-funded projects. Local knowledge, expressed through interviewees' responses and through the actions of project participants, holds the most potential for answering my research question to capture the narratives of how carbon reduction and sustainable practices play out on the community level, and what the possibilities and limitations are for community-scale projects to affect wider socio-environmental transitions towards sustainability. It has been suggested that there is a shift occurring in the relationship between science and society, whereby "the contextualisation of research around the interests of a wider range of stakeholders fosters a more 'socially robust' knowledge that transgresses disciplinary and institutional boundaries" (Gibbons & Nowotny in: Schäfer 2008:22). With respect to CCF-funded community projects, it is this socially robust knowledge that I aim to access and interpret.

My positioning as a researcher is characterised by what phenomenologists call "embodied intentionality" (Harney 2007:133). From a phenomenological point of view, intentionality is taken to be an aspect of the emerging process of being-in-the-world, an "*a priori* necessary constitution of *Da-sein*" (Heidegger 1996:50). Heidegger's work introduced the ontology of '*Da-sein*', which challenged the traditional Cartesian mind-body-dualism which has been held responsible by some environmental philosophers for a division between humans and the rest of nature (Harney 2007:135). Social and biological disciplines can be bridged through the notion of the 'embodied mind' (or 'enminded body'), as a framework through which to make sense of the world (Ingold 2000:171). If movement or action constitutes perception, as Ingold argues, then there is an intentionality in the way we perceive as researchers. According to this view, intentionality is embedded in every research process. However, intentionality as an

epistemological position tends to explicitly underpin more participatory – or transdisciplinary - forms of research which emphasise the deliberate engagement of the researcher. The extent to which this is true also depends on the different conceptualisations and intensity of participation - in my case, the process of engaging in fieldwork had a deliberate intentionality (through shared values) and embodiment (through volunteering) at its heart. A philosophy of embodied engagement involves perception through action (participation) in the research subject, in this case community projects. Simultaneously, the process of engaging in research also involves acts of transformation through perception – by taking part in the practices that I study, by interviewing informants and inviting them to reflect on their performance, I intervene in and change the 'object' of my study in subtle and unknown ways.

Ultimately, my task as a researcher in 'critical SD' is to accept that scientific peer-reviewed knowledge is one of the most reliable forms of knowledge, while acknowledging that there are other ways of knowing. Essentially, this is to avoid scientism, or "the belief that only knowledge obtained from scientific research is valid, and that notions or beliefs deriving from other sources ... should be discounted" (OED 2014b). Including different ways of knowing into problem-solving in SD is also important because scientific discourses have been historically associated with imperial ways of creating and categorising knowledges, oppressing or marginalising indigenous voices (Smith 2012:30). Local or symbolic knowledges are not deduced in the same way experimental knowledge is, but are hermeneutical or interpretive types of knowledge rooted in place or culture. In my analysis of CCF-projects I include these types of knowledge by adopting the role of a critical friend. I did not access local knowledges produced by CCF-projects from a point of view of cultural relativism, but from a point of view of shared-but-differentiated concerns around themes in SD. The following section introduces the research methods, and the process of choosing case studies.

## 4.3 The Research Methods and the Case Studies

The research methods employed have been selected through a mixture of methodological priorities and findings from a preliminary study, as elaborated on in this section. The process of finding suitable research methods is explained, choosing semi-structured interviewing and participant observation as a way of 'harvesting' and developing narratives. Furthermore, this section also outlines the underlying rationale for choosing a case studies approach in relation to the research methodology, and the process of choosing the case studies. Aspects of my participatory ethos (outlined in the previous section) are illustrated towards the end of the section by examples from the field.

The process of finding suitable research methods for researching CCF-funded projects began in 2009, as explained in section 1.1. The initial conceptualisation of the research project was outlined by its funders, the Economic and Social Research Council and the Scottish Government; the latter played a double role in funding both the research project and the subject of the research, CCF-funded community projects. A potential conflict of interest was avoided because the Scottish Government did not aim to influence the direction of the research project beyond its initial conceptualisation. Initially, the study was to involve an “analysis of how communities, who are part of CCF projects, are effectively engaged in behaviour change to reduce GHG emissions” (Bebbington 2009). During the aforementioned dissertation research project, which included three small case studies, I noted some evidence of self-reported pro-environmental behaviour change, the extent of which appeared to be limited. Furthermore, the measurement of emissions reductions of CO<sub>2</sub>e, beyond the projects' self-reported reductions which they were obliged to report to funders, was potentially problematic - mainly because of a lack of local baseline scenarios. The shifting focus between the preliminary study and the main research project is already evident in the summary of the preliminary research findings, where identities of place and underlying motivations and values of volunteers are given precedence to evidence of behaviour change.

Following on from the lack of evidence of behaviour change as a main outcome of

CCF-funded community projects, I faced the choice whether to change my research approach to quantitative measures to find better ways of capturing evidence of behaviour change and carbon reductions, or to focus on the 'soft' outcomes of community projects, which prominently emerged from the preliminary findings and which would require more qualitative and participatory research methods. This is because with regard to carbon emissions reductions on a community scale, there is increasing evidence that accurate measurements of carbon emissions reductions proves problematic at best (Nesta 2010), which in addition to a lack of baseline scenarios arises from the complexity of embedded carbon emissions, rebound effects, and the small scale of projects which reduce the reliability and accuracy of quantitative measurements that rely on large datasets.

Furthermore, this decision was informed by emerging critical views in SD literature on behaviour change as a prominent aspect of sustainable transitions. Some argue that motivations and capacities of the public to reduce their own carbon emissions are limited, making for a lack of meaningful engagement of the public with climate change (Whitmarsh et al. 2010), and that even in the case of successful behaviour change to increase energy efficiency around the home, so-called 'rebound effects' may lead to high-carbon behaviours in some areas of life to 'reward' the savings made in other areas (Chitnis et al. 2012). Others critique the very notion of behaviour change, arguing that it would require adopting a too mechanical view of the human body and mind (Webb 2012). Models of behaviours change based on environmental psychology tend to be structured around "well-tuned interventions" (Steg & Vlek 2009:309) to change specific behaviours which cause environmental problems. However, critiques of structured behaviour change models tend to focus on the 'technocratic' nature of such models, which is rooted in an individualistic view of societies in which citizens are primarily consumers (Webb 2012; Barr & Prillwitz 2014). Barr and Prillwitz elaborated further that research approaches which accept and adopt the notion of "personal responsibilities through informed choices" (2014:3) largely ignore that such choices are limited, and that physical structures as well as "the structure of everyday life and the ways in which social, economic, and cultural relations would need to shift" (2014:11) to enable more sustainable practices. Therefore 'behaviour change' is too limiting a concept to

sufficiently grasp the intentions embedded in the practices for pro-environmental change within community projects.

In accordance with a transdisciplinarity research methodology, I eventually adopted a qualitative, participatory approach to generate case studies. There is no unanimous view on what constitutes case studies; a case usually refers to diverse entities such as an individual, an organisation or a country (Burton 2000:16). The narratives emerging from the case studies were all rooted in the histories of particular places and people which gave rise to the community organisations and their projects. Localities are permeable, and other places have nurtured the experiences of project participants - they may have previously lived elsewhere (at least 15 out of 37 interviewees in the two main case studies were not born in Scotland), or they have been informed by other places in different ways.

The case studies for this research project were chosen out of all community projects which had successfully applied to the CCF's eighth round of funding. The selection process for the case studies required rigour to increase the likelihood that the case studies would yield data relevant to the research questions. One criterion for the case studies was that they had received funding in excess of £100,000 in at least two rounds of funding. There is a degree of arbitrariness in setting a minimum amount of funding and repeat funding as criteria for potential case studies; however, these criteria reflect a) a commitment of a community group to delivering a CCF-project in at least two stages and b) a substantial financial contribution to the community group, and therefore is representative of community projects which have been significantly shaped by the CCF and its aims. The process of choosing projects faced some restrictions not anticipated prior to the research. Accessibility became a major criterion because I chose a more longitudinal approach to the case studies, with weekly visits over an 11-months time frame to the CCF-projects instead of short-term immersive visits. Furthermore, I had a preference for projects that were accessible by public transport, in order to keep the carbon emissions embedded in the research activity as low as possible. Therefore I ruled out remote rural projects as main case studies, despite their status as highest number of CCF-funded projects per capita. Other criteria for the case studies were their location

(in terms of local authority catchment area), their location (in terms of rural/urban category), and their SIMD decile.

I faced a choice between conducting a relatively large number of case studies, or conducting fewer case studies and spending more time on each of them. Because the Scottish Government had commissioned Brook Lyndhurst to produce a report on a wide array of CCF-projects (2011), I prioritised depth before breadth and chose to work with three projects - *Playbusters*, *Sustaining Dunbar* and *East Kilbride Development Trust* as case studies to convey in-depth narratives. In the end, I analysed only the data from *Playbusters* and *Sustaining Dunbar* in depth<sup>20</sup>, and used selected data from *East Kilbride Development Trust* as a cross-cutting narrative in text boxes when illustrating a specific point in the data analysis. The criteria for the case studies, and how they are reflected by the community projects I chose as case studies, are shown in table 5 and discussed below.

*Table 5: Some Characteristics of the Case Studies*

<b>Name of Community Organisation</b>	<b>Funding received (CCF round)</b>	<b>SIMD decile (2009)</b>	<b>SIMD ranking (2009)</b>	<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>Urban/Rural</b>
<i>East Kilbride Development Trust</i>	£63,300 (Round 8)	3	1878	South Lanarkshire	East Kilbride	2 (Other Urban Areas)
<i>Playbusters Ltd</i>	£149,549 (Round 8)	1	13	Glasgow City	Glasgow Shettleston	1 (Large Urban Areas)
<i>Sustaining Dunbar</i>	£177,770 (Round 8)	7	3967	East Lothian	East Lothian	4 (Remote Small Towns)

Out of 32 local authorities in Scotland, 30 had CCF-projects located within them within

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<sup>20</sup> Halfway through the fieldwork, the CCF-project *East Kilbride Development Trust* experienced a change in organisational make-up and outlook, which meant that my fieldwork in this project did not yield sufficient data to warrant answering my research questions as a main case study. I therefore chose to focus on *Sustaining Dunbar* and *Playbusters* as the two main case studies, with references to *East Kilbride Development Trust* as a minor case study.

the research time frame. Because the populations of some local authority catchment areas are larger than that of others, the distribution of CCF projects varied per local authority. The three case studies were all located within different local authority catchment areas, and the density of CCF-funded projects varied between these areas. Glasgow City Council (***Playbusters***) had 39 CCF-funded projects located within its catchment area with a population of 240,557, which meant that there was one CCF-funded project for every 6,168 people. East Lothian (***Sustaining Dunbar***) had seven projects at a population of 47,149, equalling one project for every 6,736 people. In contrast, South Lanarkshire Council (***East Kilbride Development Trust***) had the lowest project density, with only eleven projects at a population of 149,883, equalling one CCF-funded project for every 13,626 people.

The case studies were located within areas whose demographic characteristics differed from each other according to the Scottish Government's urban/ rural sextiles and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles and ranking. The location of ***Playbusters*** was classified as a 'large urban' area, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was located in a remote small town, and ***East Kilbride Development Trust*** was located in an 'other urban' area (colloquially called a 'new town'). Furthermore, ***Playbusters*** was located in an area categorised as SIMD decile 1, ranking at number 13 in the SIMD index - indicating that the area was ranked the thirteenth most deprived area in Scotland. With an SIMD ranking of 3967 and within decile 7, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was located in a relatively affluent locality. Again, ***East Kilbride Development Trust***, within decile 3 and with an SIMD ranking of 1878, was in the middle of the spectrum. The contrasting characteristics of the locations of the two main case studies, ***Playbusters*** and ***Sustaining Dunbar***, were expected to produce very different narratives, which proved to be the case.

Another criterion for identifying case studies was the projects' willingness to work with me. I received one rejection by a project; the case study replacing it was ***Playbusters***. Initially, ***Playbusters*** was not my first choice, because I was seeking to research organisations that were more or less fully funded by the CCF, rather than having a branch of CCF-funded projects. However, ultimately the contrast between ***Playbusters***,

who used CCF-funding to run a project which widened the scope of their activities to incorporate environmental themes and *Sustaining Dunbar*, which at the time of fieldwork was entirely CCF-funded, provided rich data in relation to community organisation's priorities and responses to social demographics. *East Kilbride Development Trust* was also fully CCF-funded and did not employ any members of staff. I did not foresee that the project would be in its construction phase during the entirety of my fieldwork, but this yielded some insights about project stages and cycles.

The boundaries of the case studies were not always clear-cut, because there were some overlaps with other projects run by the same community organisation under different funding streams, or with projects run by, or in collaboration with, partner organisations. For example, *Sustaining Dunbar's* (and their partner organisation Be Green's) projects were all part of a wider strategy which was integrated through a Local Resilience Action Plan (LRAP). Within *Playbusters*, some volunteers were active in several projects under different funding streams, and did not necessarily differentiate between them in interviews. I addressed this largely by volunteering only in the CCF-funded projects run under the umbrella of Grow Green With Glasgow's East End (GWGEE), and 'Connecting Dunbar'. However, the CCF and its impact is only one strand of the questions guiding this thesis; another strand inquired more generally into community projects' roles in SD. Therefore, where it was relevant to convey a wider understanding of the CCF-projects in their wider context, or to refer to examples of other projects within the community organisations which covered aspects of SD, at times I referred to projects run by the community organisations that were supported by different funding streams, but ran concurrent with round 8 of CCF-funding. The case studies forming the backbone of this research project were, in Burton's (2000) words, at least to some extent "grounded" in the data (216) and emerged during the research process. As entities, the case studies are defined as CCF-projects and concurrent SD-related projects run by the chosen community organisations in the time frame between April 2011 and March 2012.

During the fieldwork stage of the main research project, I undertook weekly visits in the three projects, recorded through ethnographic journaling, over a time-span of eleven months. The main methods of data gathering involved participant observation and semi-



structured interviewing. Semi-structured qualitative interviewing is a research method well suited to “access the 'world' in terms of those people being researched” (Stroh 2000:197). One restriction of interviewing is that the interviewer invites a 'rewriting of history': interviewees “will document their past in a way which fits it, highlighting certain features and downplaying others” (Silverman 2006:39). In other words, interviews are not a way of harvesting descriptive data, but involve an element of interpretation - thereby construing narratives (Silverman 2006:39). Rather than merely describing activities within community projects, I was interested in finding out the meaning it carried for participants, and the way they edited the narratives of community projects in their own words. Overall, I conducted 51 semi-structured interviews as part of the research phase, all of which were with project staff members, participants, associates and beneficiaries. The interviews were on average an hour long.

In addition to the narratives emerging from interviews, I participated in the projects as a volunteer in order to construe my own narrative by immersing myself in project routines and relationships (Cook 2005:167), thereby also building relationships with informants who would become my interviewees. Participant observation is the standard method in social anthropological fieldwork, involving “participation in everyday activities, working in the native language and observing events in their everyday context” (Barnard & Spencer 2002:616). Participant observation has endured as a method because “experience is necessary for understanding” (Lewis 1994:582). However, in some cases I participated by actively contributing to the projects in a way that went beyond the role of an observer. For example, I designed the logo for *East Kilbride Development Trust* (see illustration 3).



*Illustration 3: East Kilbride Development Trust Website with Logo*

By conducting several case studies simultaneously (see section 3.5), I was not able to contextualise the projects through 'thick description' by “evoking the actual feeling of day-to-day, week-to-week, year-to-year of community life” (Blackshaw 2010:72) which an immersive, long-term stay in one place would have allowed me to do. Instead, my field recordings were based on several weekly visits and actions that took place within projects during these visits, and on my experience of volunteering. Below is an excerpt from my field notes which describes an experimental, fragile learning-by-doing approach to a project activity, in this case bee keeping in **East Kilbride Development Trust**, and my role as an active project participant while in the field.

*“We fed the sugar blocks to the bees. Brian<sup>21</sup> worried they could get mouldy. Jack and Lorna had previously cut insulation material to go on top of the sugar, inside the extra frame (Lorna laughed that the straight lines were Jack's, the not so straight ones hers). We open up the first bee hive and bees begin to pour out excitedly, landing on us. We put the sugar packet on top of the frames with the comb, and try to finish the job as quickly as possible, but Lorna was visibly nervous. Would the bees get too cold if we disturbed them at this time of the year? We get a smoker and lighten up some cloth and shredded paper that Lorna has brought from home to avoid using the damp material from the storage container. We then continue to feed sugar to the other hives. Lorna at first wanted to simply place [the sugar] onto the crown board to not disturb the bees, I encourage the others to treat all hives in the same manner, and we eventually do [what I suggested]. Because of the smoker or because the other bee swarms have withdrawn themselves more deeply into the hives, we manage to finish the job without disturbing the other swarms in a major manner. Lorna said that [feeding the sugar blocks this time] was just a precaution; it was not necessary. She would check up on the bees again in two weeks.” [Excerpt from field notes, **East Kilbride Development Trust**, 9.1.2012]*

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21 All names have been changed.

*(The author is on the left)*



*Illustration 4: East Kilbride Development Trust - Volunteering in the Bee Group*

My experience of participation varied considerably between the different community organisations. ***Sustaining Dunbar*** operated mainly from an office, and apart from some events and activities I attended (such as a 'Dr Bike' bicycle repair event, or a public film screening), I was based in the office. My field notes were less detailed and based on hands-on project work and interactions, which is why most of the data has been derived from interviews.

*“Today I went to Dunbar; John was in from 10.30am. I arrived and he and Grace again sat down with me around the table and discussed serious plans. I was given a task which sounded quite exciting - comparing East Lothian Council's Single Outcome Agreement with the Local Resilience Action Plan. So I did computer work for the rest of the day. I had the occasional chat with curious office workers (such as the IT person), but the experience differs profoundly from the hands-on stuff I am used to from other projects.”* [Excerpt from field notes, ***Sustaining Dunbar***, 13.5.2011]

As a participant in the projects, I undertook another small piece of research work at the request of ***Sustaining Dunbar*** which came to inform my data, which was the only time

a community organisation had input in my research design: I interviewed civil servants of East Lothian Council and the Community Planning Partnership. I undertook various other tasks for the community projects as a volunteer, such as building raised beds for food growing, helping with bee keeping, interviewing local authority civil servants, working in a swap shop alongside other volunteers, conducting energy surveys in people's homes, planting trees, saving seeds, and tending to vegetables as they grew. On all of these accounts I helped the projects advance their aims and objectives, while observing their methods and group dynamics.

As a researcher, I also was responsible to ensure that my conduct was ethical. By allowing me access to the projects, the community organisations and individual participants made themselves potentially vulnerable to criticisms, based on my writings. As a participant in the projects, I built friendly relationships to other volunteers and staff members, and did not include any comments of a private nature in my data analysis. However, perhaps the most valuable types of research relationships that involve participation “allow researchers to retain longer-term connections with stakeholders” (Franklin & Blyton 2011:7). This was not achieved as part of this research project. I did not remain involved in the community projects I participated in during the fieldwork, which meant that most of the relationships I forged were restricted to the duration of my participation in the projects. While I was transparent about my status as a researcher during the fieldwork and gave out information sheets to the community organisations, my participation in the projects (especially *Playbusters* and *East Kilbride Development Trust*) was immersive - I embraced my role as a volunteer as much as my role as a researcher. It would have been a barrier to full participation and relationship building to remind other volunteers of my status as a researcher before every activity. However, this meant that there could have been occasions where people informally disclosed information during project activities which they may not have wished to disclose for research purposes. It then became my responsibility to discern which data to include in the field notes, which data to exclude from the field notes for reasons of confidentiality, and which data to use at the stage of analysis. When analysing the data, I focused on the strengths of the projects on their terms, trusting in their role as 'experts' of their localities, as defined by their organisational aims and priorities. Where I highlighted

barriers faced by the projects, I focused on structural issues rather than on the contributions of individuals within the projects, to protect their anonymity. In order to preserve the locally specific characteristics which are an important factor of the case study narratives, I did not change the names of the case studies and places. However, I protected the anonymity of interviewees within the case studies by changing all their names (see tables 6, 7 and 8).

*Table 6: Playbusters - Interviews with Informants*

<b>“Name”</b> <i>(All names have been changed.)</i>	<b>Known remit</b>	<b>“Name”</b>	<b>Known remit</b>
Sam	<b>Staff member:</b> Grow Green with Glasgow's East End (GGWGEE) co-ordinator	Dave	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE
Siobhan	<b>Staff member:</b> GGWGEE / swap shop	Alex	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE
Caitlin	<b>Staff member:</b> GGWGEE / food growing	Sinead	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE
Heather	<b>Staff member:</b> Administration	Mary	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE
Lynn	<b>Staff member:</b> Administration	Helen	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE, litter picking, 'Activate' course
Douglas	<b>Staff member:</b> Walk On The Wild Side	Jane	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE
Calum	<b>Staff member:</b> Walk On The Wild Side	Noemi	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE, Spanish classes
Derek	<b>Volunteer:</b> Allotment, Board of Directors	Susan	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE, events in the park, 'Activate' course
Anton	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE	Rahim	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE
Harry	<b>Volunteer:</b> GGWGEE	Mike	<b>Collaborating organisation:</b> Glasgow City Council

*Table 7: Sustaining Dunbar - Interviews with Informants*

<b>“Name”</b>	<b>Known remit</b>	<b>“Name”</b>	<b>Known remit</b>
John	<b>Staff member:</b> Administration / Connecting Dunbar	Aileen	<b>Collaborating organisation:</b> Energy advice / audits
Grace	<b>Staff member:</b> Administration / Connecting Dunbar	Alastair	<b>Collaborating organisation:</b> East Lothian Council
Fiona	<b>Staff member:</b> Connecting Dunbar	Lisa	<b>Collaborating organisation:</b> East Lothian Council
Melissa	<b>Staff member:</b> Connecting Dunbar	Donald	<b>Collaborating organisation:</b> East Lothian Council
Bob	<b>Staff member:</b> Connecting Dunbar / Energy advice / audits	Amy	<b>Collaborating organisation:</b> East Lothian Council
Ben	<b>Staff member:</b> Connecting Dunbar	Vicky	<b>Collaborating organisation:</b> Community Planning Partnership
Tim	<b>Staff member:</b> Energy advice / audits	Catriona	<b>Collaborating organisation:</b> Community Woodlands Group
Cath	<b>Volunteer:</b> Board of Directors	Duncan	<b>Collaborating organisation:</b> Energy advice / audits service user

*Table 8: East Kilbride Development Trust - Interviews with Informants*

<b>“Name”</b>	<b>Known remit</b>	<b>“Name”</b>	<b>Known remit</b>
Sarah	<b>Volunteer:</b> committee / gardening	Clare	<b>Volunteer:</b> local media liaison
Stewart	<b>Volunteer:</b> committee / building & gardening	Brian	<b>Volunteer:</b> bee group
Liz	<b>Volunteer:</b> committee / schools liaison / site	Lorna	<b>Volunteer:</b> bee group/ website
Alan	<b>Volunteer:</b> committee / site management	David	<b>Volunteer:</b> bee group
Paul	<b>Volunteer:</b> committee	William	<b>Collaborating Organisation:</b> bee keeping network
Eleanor	<b>Volunteer:</b> gardening	Jack	<b>Volunteer:</b> bee group
Anne	<b>Volunteer:</b> committee	Mhairi	<b>Collaborating Organisation:</b> local college
Tom	<b>Volunteer:</b> building & gardening		

In summary, the research methods involved constructing case studies of carefully selected CCF-funded community projects in the context of their wider community organisations and their SD-related projects from other funding streams. The process of choosing the research methods corresponded to the underlying transdisciplinary methodology and participatory ethos I brought to the research project. Including some project activities which were not CCF-funded, but run by the chosen community organisations, served to generate a full picture of the community organisations' priorities and SD-related activities, reflecting blurred boundaries and collaborations within projects. However, I did not include project activities which did not contain explicitly environmental elements, in order to retain a focus on SD in the overall analysis. The data was partially anonymised, and I discerned which data was included and how it was framed in line with my positionality as a 'critical friend' of community projects for SD and climate action.

The end of this chapter also marks a shift in focus within the thesis. The previous chapters (concerned with literature and theories, methodologies and methods) are built upon in the following chapters, which describe and analyse the empirical findings of the two main case studies (with selective references to the third case study) which lie at the heart of the thesis.

## **CHAPTER FIVE - Community Organisations: Leadership and Sustainability Governance**

### **5.0 Introduction**

*"Entire communities also come to understand that while it is necessary to hold their governments accountable, it is equally important that in their own relationships with each other, they exemplify the leadership values they wish to see in their own leaders." (Maathai 2004)*

This chapter examines organisational structures, including leadership styles, and the role of volunteering, in order to identify the impact of organisational characteristics on community-level sustainability governance. The research question which drove the data collection for this chapter is: *RQ 1) How do the different styles of leadership within CCF projects impact on the engagement of project participants?* Within community projects, leadership was shared; while project managers or project co-ordinators drove the overall vision of the community projects, applied for funding and frequently presented a public face, the full-time, part-time or sessional staff members employed through the particular CCF-funded projects ran the activities and thus engaged project participants on a daily basis. The main theoretical framework for discussing community organisations is Heiskanen et al.'s (2010) distinction between group-oriented and governance-oriented community groups, which best serves to illustrate the impact of organisational structures on their ways of engaging people. While there is an abundant body of literature on leadership, I was primarily interested in exploring leadership as expressed in a collective setting or community group, rather than exploring individualistic characteristics of particular leaders. Therefore, I focus on the 'four rules of effective leadership' in social psychology as the theoretical framing, formulating a



relational approach to leadership which takes into account the 'in-group' and its identity (Haslam et al. 2011). This is to emphasise the shared leadership levels and community group orientation observed in the projects.

Together with chapters 6 and 7, this chapter constitutes the empirical part of the thesis, and presents and analyses the data through case studies. The structure of the empirical chapters contains case study narratives within each section, framed by revisiting or introducing the relevant literature. This chapter begins by discussing organisational elements of community groups (section 5.1), followed by an analysis of different leadership styles and shared roles (section 5.2), and the differing roles volunteering played within the case studies and questions around inequalities and the nature of work (section 5.3). The sections' findings are discussed in the light of the case studies' realised and possible potentials for sustainability governance (section 5.4).

## **5.1 Organisational Structures Within Community Projects**

The CCF's requirements did not include a prescriptive model for organisational structures other than the requirement of community groups who applied for grant funding to be “legally constituted (by the time of receiving funding, if not by the time of application)” (Keep Scotland Beautiful, no date-a). Therefore, some degree of formalised organisational structure was required for community groups who applied for the funding. The field of organisational studies deals with organisations at all scales and for different purposes, and encompasses a range of topics; for example, motivations of people in the workplace (Lunenburg 2011), group dynamics and informal interactions (Fayard & Weeks 2007). Scholarship on the organisational structure of community groups is scarce. In this section, I mainly focus on Heiskanen et al.'s (2010) distinction between 'high-grid' (highly structured and 'reaching out' to the wider community) and 'high-group' (inward and group-oriented) community organisations, as this has been a

useful framework for understanding the different ways in which the case study organisations engaged participants.

What does it mean for community groups to constitute themselves as organisations? Carr (2013) describes organisations as being situated “somewhere between micro and macro- dynamics” (37). While organisations may or may not have political aims, at their most basic level organisations operate as collective bodies that perform tasks.

“Organizations, through the principle and practice of organization, help focus attention on translating goals into action, namely through actual work, and the organization of skills and labor. ” (Carr 2013:38)

The 'in-betweenness' of organisations, and in particular community organisations, is reminiscent of Tönnies' juxtaposition of 'community' with 'society' (in Williams 1976:76). One challenge in applying literature concerned with organisations and SD to community projects is that organisational literature concerned with SD tends to be primarily concerned with corporate social responsibility (CSR), where business plays a central or even “hegemonic” role (Mayes et al. 2013:841). While community organisations may also engage in business activities, their primary function can be described as doing work on the ground, with groups of people, driven by their particular aims - for example, aims of a social or environmental nature. When applied to community organisations, Carr's (2013) definition of organisations as being situated and acting between micro- and macrodynamics locates 'communities' as lodged between individual spheres of action and that of political institutions, as discussed in chapter 2. Specifically, community organisations emerge as an organisational category which has some of the same characteristics as commercial and other types of organisation (for example, having a governance structure and characterised by goals and specialisations), but whose goals have emerged in response to local needs and perspectives. Community organisations fulfil all three of Banks' (2003) criteria: they are descriptive (alluding to shared locations and interests), promote positive connotations to community, and they are active, promoting participation in their activities. However, these three criteria may be satisfied to different degrees between community organisations, and in different

aspects or projects within the same community organisation.

One attempt to categorise community organisations comes from practitioners: *The Governance Code* (no date) was developed to establish a framework for good practice for community organisations in Ireland. *The Governance Code* categorises organisations into three types: type A (volunteers, no staff members), type B (few staff members; board members may be involved in running projects) and type C (more staff members; clear division between project execution and board members who are solely concerned with governance) (no date). *Playbusters* and *Sustaining Dunbar* fall into the Type B category and also displayed elements of Type C organisations. *East Kilbride Development Trust* was fully run by volunteers, and is a Type A organisation. While *The Governance Code* helps to categorise community organisations, this categorisation is of limited usefulness for analysing how community organisations engage participants and achieve their aims, without including organisational goals and purposes in the analysis.

In order to analyse the goals and purposes of community organisations, an inquiry into their target audiences and remit is useful. Heiskanen et al. (2010) differentiate between 'high-grid' and 'high-group' community organisations. 'High-grid' community organisations attempt to change the structure of a place through a clear division of labour and rules governing social relations. In contrast, 'high-group' community organisations emphasise the boundary between the community and the outside, and group members share strong personal and emotional ties (Heiskanen et al. 2010:7593). Each of the two community organisation structures has strengths and weaknesses. 'High-grid' community organisations have more power to effect change due to their more structured character, yet the institutions and systems they aim to change have considerable embodied inertia. In contrast, 'high-group' community organisations can act efficiently within their group of members, but may have limited capacity to reach out beyond that, and the demands on members can lead to burnout symptoms (Heiskanen et al. 2010:7593). The differentiation between 'high-grid' and 'high-group' community organisations tells us little about how these organisations are governed, but provides a useful starting point for describing their aims and goals.

“These two dimensions [grid and group] produce the basic forms of social structure, with different ways of dealing with risks like climate change. A community with ‘high grid’ and ‘low group’ is typically individualist, whereas a community with ‘high group’ and ‘low grid’ is typically egalitarian. ‘High grid’ combined with ‘high group’ produces a hierarchical structure. ” (Heiskanen et al. 2010:7588)

When applied to the case studies, Heiskanen et al.'s (2010) model was useful for analysing organisational motivations, structures and purposes, particularly when exploring differences between the *Playbusters* and *Sustaining Dunbar*. The case studies displayed different propensities towards being 'grid' or 'group' as a dominant ('high'), secondary ('low') or moderate ('medium') characteristic, unless both characteristics were displayed equally strongly (see table 9).

Table 9: Organisational Structures within the Case Studies

Organisation name and main characteristics	Some aspects of the organisation's governance structure	Dominant characteristic: high, medium or low 'grid' or 'group' <sup>22</sup>
<p><b>Playbusters</b></p> <p>Charity / voluntary Board of Directors, project co-ordinator, full-time, part-time or sessional staff members, volunteers</p>	<p>The project manager, answering to the Board, was mainly responsible for fundraising and overseeing the organisational direction. The role of staff members was to facilitate activities, including providing space and equipment, and to ensure that funders' targets were met. The relationship between staff members and volunteers usually had clearly defined boundaries, restricted to working hours.</p> <p>“<b>Playbusters</b> is managed by a voluntary Board of Directors consisting of parents and grandparents from the wider East End. The committee have undergone extensive training and this has resulted in publishing of a business plan.” (Playbusters: no date)</p>	<p>'Medium grid' &amp; 'high-group': the organisation placed an explicit emphasis on the personal development and bonding of volunteers during project activities, yet activities such as the 'Grow Green Awards' point towards ambitions to foster environmental activities beyond the organisation.</p>
<p><b>Sustaining Dunbar</b></p> <p>Charity / voluntary Board of Directors, two project co-ordinators (job share), part-time or sessional staff members, in the process to become a Community Interest Company</p>	<p>Most of the CCF funding was spent on staff salaries, and few volunteers worked for the organisation itself. Volunteers worked for various local community groups who worked closely with <b>Sustaining Dunbar</b>.</p> <p><b>Sustaining Dunbar</b> worked closely and shared an office with Be Green, a local energy advice organisation which was in the process of being registered as a Community Interest Company (Interview: John).</p>	<p>'High-grid' &amp; 'low group': the organisation placed the strongest emphasis on strategic planning for the local region, local events and services, and much less emphasis on 'Sustaining Dunbar' as a group beyond the professional relationships of employees.</p>
<p><b>East Kilbride Development Trust</b></p> <p>Volunteer committee, group of volunteer helpers</p>	<p><b>East Kilbride Development Trust</b> was run by a committee, which consisted mainly of founding members who were elected at an Annual General Meeting. Other volunteers did not have an official membership status, and leadership was kept informal. Degrees of leadership emerged from individual people's knowledge, enthusiasm, length of involvement, and on taking initiatives forward such as funding applications and building networks with official institutions such as South Lanarkshire Council, East Kibride's National Museum of Rural Life and South Lanarkshire Council.</p>	<p>'Low-to-medium-grid' and 'high-group': while there were some public events and workshops, and the group installed gardens at local schools, there seemed to be no explicit structure for engaging the immediate community, and the working relationships between participants were kept mainly informal.</p>

Source: Author's own analysis; multiple data sources

22 The 'grid/ group' classification represents a momentary glimpse of project characteristics during fieldwork, and therefore cannot be seen as describing the case study community organisations in absolute terms.

Classifying community projects through high, medium or low 'grid' or 'group' characteristics describes tendencies rather than absolute characteristics. Group-internal matters and identities necessarily played a part in organising community organisations, and all CCF-funded community organisations had some degree of commitment to effecting change in the wider community. *Sustaining Dunbar* exemplified a 'team-based task organisation', operating through project teams according to the requirement of the project (Butcher 2003:75). *Sustaining Dunbar*'s strength lay in its 'high-grid' outlook, because the organisation specialised in strategic 'resilience' planning for less reliance on fossil fuels. The organisation was also 'low group', not explicitly encouraging group formation - largely because local voluntary groups appeared to thrive more or less independently of *Sustaining Dunbar*. However, what was found to be the case in 'high-grid' communities in general, also appeared to be the case in *Sustaining Dunbar*:

“High-grid communities have more power to effect changes due to their more structured character. Yet on the other hand, as they build on existing structures, they have a large task in transforming those structures, which have considerable inertia embodied in existing institutions, social relations and technological systems.” (Heiskanen et al. 2010:7593)

Working strategically with East Lothian Council and the CPP (Community Planning Partnership), *Sustaining Dunbar* faced barriers to exerting its influence in the region, which will be further discussed in section 5.3.

*Playbusters* had a clear division of labour in the sense of having clear job descriptions (for staff members and volunteers within particular projects), exemplifying a bureaucratic organisational model (Butcher 2003:75). At the same time, *Playbusters*' focus was explicitly on the personal development of and group formation between volunteers, making the organisation 'high-group'. However, because the organisation ran a wide range of projects and reached out across the East End of Glasgow to systematically tackle perceived shortcomings in education and leisure activities and to incentivise environmental projects through the 'Grow Green Awards', the organisation

was also 'medium grid'. The implications of *Playbusters'* 'high-group'-orientation will be explored further in chapter 7, in relation to the organisation's focus on the collective elements of the array of activities offered to participants.

*East Kilbride Development Trust's* project also displayed 'high-group' and 'low-to-medium grid' characteristics. The levels of project activity depended on the availability of volunteers, the roles within the project were for the most part not clearly defined but tended to be led by a small core of people, guided by one or two people in particular. *East Kilbride Development Trust* operated according to the 'club model', resting on the influence of an individual or group (Butcher 2003:75). While the organisation reached out to the wider community (for example, by organising seed swaps or building school gardens), the group of volunteers did not systematically engage residents of East Kilbride in the garden site which was located in an isolated part of a country park, unlike the urban community gardens of *Playbusters* which were surrounded by residential areas (see chapters 6 & 7). *East Kilbride Development Trust's* *ad hoc* approach to community outreach is in line with Heiskanen et al.'s (2010) suggestion that “low-grid communities have little existing structure to slow their pace, yet lack of concentrated power can make it more difficult for them to exert an influence outside their membership” (7593).

According to Heiskanen et al. (2010), where a community organisation sits on the spectrum of 'high-grid' and 'high-group' orientations is in part related to how structured community organisations are in terms of their division of labour; however, the degree of structuredness might be a response to the organisation's goals and how best to serve organisational needs. The data does not conclusively explain how exactly the structure and goals of community projects were related to each other within the case studies. *Sustaining Dunbar* was 'high-grid' oriented, while the other two case studies were 'high-group' oriented. This indicates that, within the case studies, there was more emphasis on interpersonal relationships and collectivity than on affecting systematic, wider change processes. It is, however, important to note that the qualitative nature of the data does not indicate whether CCF-funded community organisations overall tend to display 'high-group' over 'high-grid' characteristics. Whether a community organisation

is 'high-grid' or 'high-group' oriented may also be a response to local needs and priorities. For example, **Playbusters** organised, as part of their activities and in collaboration with the campaigning organisation 'Poverty Alliance', a 'poverty campaign group', where volunteers were invited to engage with and amplify local issues of concern through various media. However, after about three meetings, the 'poverty campaign group' was stalled due to lack of interest, which could indicate that the 'high-grid' nature of campaigning perhaps did not appeal to sufficient numbers of **Playbusters** volunteers to include campaigning in the spectrum of ongoing activities. On the other hand, the participants attracted by a particular community organisation may share some of the organisation's identity and outlook; for example, it may be difficult to enthuse participants who joined a 'high-group' organisation for 'high-grid' activities. In contrast, **Sustaining Dunbar** was primarily concerned with wider change processes; however, the organisation collaborated with a number of independent community groups that may have saturated the locality with opportunities for participation in group activities.

In summary, community organisations are best described in terms of their goals and outlooks instead of how organisational structures affect their engagement of participants. This is partly because organisational structures are limited in explaining interpersonal dynamics which underlie the engagement of participants - whereby 'participants' refers to anyone who uses the services of community organisations and attends events, but in particular volunteers (the role of volunteers is explored in section 5.3). Organisational priorities may reflect local needs and priorities to some extent, but whether they present themselves as mainly group-oriented ('high-group') or aim to effect structural change ('high-grid') is also likely to affect the expectations and motivations of participants. Another lens through which to analyse organisations, and which places an emphasis on inter-personal and inter-group relationships, is the analysis of leadership characteristics within the organisations, which is explored in the following section.



## 5.2 Leadership Dynamics and Identities

This section explores leadership dynamics within the case studies, to determine how they relate to the engagement of participants within the community organisations. I primarily draw upon leadership theories in social psychology, because these focus on the leadership role as part of group dynamics, which I anticipated to be particularly relevant to community organisations, which was reflected in my research question (RQ1). Accordingly, the data collection focused less on the individualistic psychological assets of individual leaders and more on the group dynamics arising from particular leadership styles<sup>23</sup>. I will also discuss emerging literature on sustainability leadership, conceptualising leaders as part of wider systems (Robèrt et al. 2004), as this approach adds a conceptual framing of leadership which complements the social psychological focus on group dynamics. The analysis focuses on the 'group' aspect on leadership, analysing data of community project participants who hinted at the importance of having been engaged or inspired by particularly driven individuals who tended to hold leadership positions within the organisations.

The field of leadership studies has traditionally focused on psychological traits of individual leaders or the “great man [sic]” (Haslam et al. 2011:2). At the heart of individual-centric leadership theories lies the notion of charisma, which Max Weber described as “a certain quality of an individual personality by which he [sic] is set apart from ordinary men [sic] and treated as endowed with superhuman, or ... exceptional powers or qualities” (in Haslam et al. 2011:4). The crucial contribution of Haslam et al.'s (2011) approach to analysing effective leadership was to move away from theories that locate leadership qualities (such as charisma) as being located within an individual, but instead proposed a 'group-oriented' theory of leadership which construes leadership qualities as relational. Leaders need to be simultaneously 'one of us' and adopt transformative, pioneering roles. Accordingly, Haslam et al. have named 'four rules' to effective leadership, according to which leaders need to be a) in-group prototypes

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23 After the fieldwork was completed and the data was analysed, it turned out that profiling individual leaders within community organisations might have produced interesting results, because some community group leaders referred to crucial experiences in their past which led them to embrace responsible roles in sustainability activism.

(being 'one of' the group), b) in-group champions ('doing it for' the group), c) entrepreneurs of identity (constructing the group identity) and d) embedders of identity: translating the group identity they have constructed into social reality (Haslam et al. 2011:75). Haslam et al.'s leadership model draws upon experiments in social psychology which examined the dynamics which caused people to cluster in 'in-groups' with distinct group identities, and 'out-groups'. In order to be accepted by an in-group, a leader has to embody and champion characteristics of the in-group (rules a and b) as well as help shape and embed the group identity (rules c and d), the nature of which depends on the context (Haslam et al. 2011:9). Different group identities are appropriate for different contexts such as politics, business, or community groups with social or environmental goals. The implications of enclosed group identities for community groups present challenges with respect to how representative they are of their wider communities, as discussed in chapter 2.

Haslam et al.'s (2011) social psychology of leadership is not the only relational model of leadership. Two other relational models of leadership are transformative leadership and servant leadership. Transformational leadership focuses on organisational effectiveness, thereby emphasising “the leader's skills [and] hierarchical power relationships between leader and follower” (Van Dierendonck et al. 2013:544). Meanwhile, servant leadership focuses on the needs of followers, thereby emphasising “the humility and spirituality of leaders, mutual power, visions of a way of life for the leader and followers, emulation of the leader's service orientation, and the autonomy and moral development of followers” (Van Dierendonck et al. 2013:544). Transformational leadership is less strongly relational than servant leadership. Nevertheless, by putting organisational goals at the heart of effective leadership, rather than the leader's personal agenda, transformational leadership is more relational than 'great man' notions of leadership. Servant leadership, however, is a strongly relational model, characterised by a “sustained and altruistic commitment to help followers to grow” (Yoshida et al. 2014:1395).

Another relational view on leadership is presented in scholarship on sustainability leadership. According to Ferdig's (2007) take on sustainability leadership, the role of a leader involves 'leading with' instead of 'over' others, and leadership is part of “the

holistic interconnections that exist among and between people and natural systems” (27). The relational aspect of leadership is here extended beyond the interpersonal realm to include complexity and uncertainty (Ferdig 2007:33). Ferdig does not discuss how the more-than-human realm informs sustainability leadership in the interactions with 'followers'; while more-than-human systems cannot be 'followers' in the same way as human followers, strategic conservation work, or stopping ecocide, clearly exemplifies sustainability leadership in relation to the more-than-human community.

For the analysis of the case studies, Haslam et al.'s (2011) 'four rules' of leadership are helpful in shedding light on the specific mechanisms of leadership identities and dynamics. It is difficult to determine 'followership' within community organisations, and leadership dynamics are best construed in terms of the group identity of a community organisation. For example, if community groups are in themselves adopting a leadership role in sustainability governance, as manifested especially in *Sustaining Dunbar*, then the 'four rules' of effective leadership may not only apply to their individual leaders, but -through shared or distributed leadership- to the community group and its partners. However, community organisations do not necessarily aim to engage in sustainability leadership, especially if CCF-funding was only one funding stream sustaining the organisation (for example, only some of *Playbusters*' activities reflected SD aims). In the following paragraphs, leadership structures within the two main case studies are outlined to illustrate in particular the shared or distributed leadership within the organisations, with references to aspects of transformational and servant leadership exemplified in the projects.

#### Case Study 1: *Playbusters*

There were several levels of leadership in *Playbusters*. A project manager was responsible for overseeing the organisation, a volunteer manager was responsible for the support of all volunteers, a team of staff members oversaw the particular projects, and sessional staff members aided with the delivery. 'Grow Green with Glasgow's East End' (GGWGEE), the CCF-funded project run by Playbusters, was managed by a project leader, and put into practice by a sustainable food officer and a waste officer. Taken

together, there was not one leader, but nested leadership within **Playbusters**.

Lynn<sup>24</sup>, who was still project manager at the time of research but was in the process of departing, was responsible for overseeing the entire organisation of **Playbusters**. Lynn wrote the majority of funding applications (Interview: Siobhan) and hence played a big role in shaping the direction and content of the organisation's projects. Staff members of **Playbusters** described Lynn as a hard-working visionary who appeared to have a good relationship to staff members and volunteers. Lynn herself emphasised that she had to get to know the East End and dialogue with people in order to become effective.

*“My role was to develop Playbusters into a voluntary organisation so that the leadership, the governance, would be local people, and from there they would take the organisation forward. So that was my main aim and that was in 2004. So around about 2005 the organisation became a community-led organisation and we formed a committee through a whole series of focus groups etc. And we formed a committee of people from all different areas in the East End. We felt it was very important because there are issues of territoriality in the East End and we felt it was very important to bring people across from different areas to work effectively and strategically across the East End. So we became a voluntary committee in 2005 and a charity and since then, I have moved on a number of programmes through listening to people in the community and, y'know, effective partnerships with other organisations, so, here we are now.” - Lynn*

Sam, GGWGEE's project leader, explained that the community-led ethos, specifically a socially excluded community taking the lead on environmental issues, was a big part of what attracted him to the organisation (Interview: Sam). GGWGEE's volunteers generally worked in a specific area and decided together on the direction their project took. For example, volunteers had input in the development of the swap shop 'Simply Swap', one of the most widely publicised elements of the Grown Green project. A decentralised approach to leadership, doing local research and networking characterised Sam's style, as well as responding to the interests of volunteers.

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24 All names have been changed. The full tables of interviewees' pseudonyms are included in chapter 4.

*“Playbusters has done things around kind of environmental issues in a broad sense for quite a while. ... There was activities around kind of planting and growing things, and that led to the Playbusters allotment which we have, and I think just generally it's evolved, and ideas have come out, and there was a lot of interest that people have shown in these kinds of things. ... In our application we had things around waste and around those issues, but we've never put in that we were gonna do the swap shops. But this idea came out, we started looking in the environment group quite a lot at waste and reuse and recycling, 'cause that was something that a few people in the group showed an interest in. And then, ...I think it was just a discussion that Lynn had with someone else, and this idea of the swap shop came out. And we put it to the group, and there was a lot of interest - people seemed really keen on the idea. It was something that people kind of relate to. So we work with a little group of volunteers.” - Sam*

Douglas, who ran an environmental project with children, explained that he knew territorialism existed in the area from his own involvement in it before he underwent a radical personal change. He was intimately familiar with many of the issues the children were facing, and may be termed a role model for some of the children. As a result, they appeared to trust him and said they had learned much more about wildlife than in biology classes at school (Interview: Douglas).

*“One of the things that I tried to mention to the younger ones at Sorby Street as they're coming on - there's a few of them that have been boasting about the gang fighting. And in my younger days I fought in gangs as well, it's almost indicative. I had to leave Glasgow at 19 to move to the Channel Islands because of my involvement in gang fighting. I had the opportunity to reflect on the behavioural patterns that have been shown in Glasgow when I stayed in Jersey, because that behaviour just isnae accepted. It doesn't occur. I had a chance to reflect - it wasnae paying my bills, I wasn't getting on in life. And why am I fighting for the name of a street? And I can approach the kids and say 'what is it you're gonnae lose?' 'I cannae afford to lose the face'. 'You're no' losing face, you're actually the*

*bigger person, you're learning a new skill, you're learning to walk away.' And it turns them away fae this self-destructive pattern, tae at that point they can start to be constructive, they can start planting trees, they can start learning how to weave willow, and cut wood and build bird-boxes and create footpaths out of just old muck and old pieces of hessian.” - Douglas*

Different 'levels' of leadership within **Playbusters** expressed different 'rules of leadership' according to Haslam et al.'s (2010) model. For example, project manager Lynn tended to spend more time on shaping and embedding the organisation's identity by deciding on the overall direction while 'mucking in' with tasks on the ground, such as representing the organisation during local community events and at more formal events with local politicians. In the relationship between volunteers and the staff members who ran the different groups and projects within the organisation (for example Sam, Siobhan and Douglas), the in-group prototypical and championship aspects tended to be emphasised over identity entrepreneurship and embedding. For example, staff members working for GGWGEE tended to be involved in environmental activities in their private lives and thus lead by example, through what may be termed 'sustainable lifestyles'. Staff members volunteered in community gardens, tried to reduce their personal waste to a minimum or had adopted a vegetarian diet (Interviews: Sam, Siobhan). While volunteers may not necessarily have felt moved to adopt similar lifestyles, interview responses indicated (see text box 2) that staff members' pro-environmental lifestyle choices gave volunteers food for thought. At the same time, staff members were seen to integrate themselves more or less seamlessly into the groups they were working with. Staff members had to share some of the characteristics of the group in some respects, in order to encourage participants to remain engaged, and to come forth and make suggestions.

The staff members who worked with young people had to display all 'four rules' of leadership effectively in order to be accepted by young people (who may not be prone to accept authority figures due to challenging experiences at home or in school), and be role models in order to engage the young people in activities they had no prior exposure to. Douglas' background in "gang fighting" might have given him an understanding of

the issues faced by some of the young people with respect to peer pressure and “losing face”, while at the same time demonstrating that some of the choices he made had led to a different outlook in life, which he was now sharing with young participants. For all staff members, but particularly for those who worked with young volunteers, it was perhaps particularly crucial to be perceived as 'one of us' because of a cultural current of conformity in Glasgow:

*“The one thing a lot of Glaswegians don't like is somebody who's different. 'how dare you, dont you forget where you came fae, don't you forget who you are'.”* - Douglas

Accordingly, in order to engage and motivate especially the young volunteers, staff members had to at the same time comply with and transcend conformity in order to inspire others to try something new. It was considered good practice when **Playbusters** staff contributed extra time volunteering for the project. Awards won by **Playbusters** were explicitly accepted on behalf of both staff members and volunteers, who were all invited along to formal functions. Staff members regularly thanked and praised volunteers for their involvement and hard work at ceremonial events. In return, none of the volunteers interviewed questioned the usefulness of employed staff members' facilitating and enabling role in the project; some spoke out actively in favour of the current leadership model (Interview: Harry).

While particular emphasis was placed on recruiting board members from among local parents or grandparents (Playbusters, no date) and on encouraging input of volunteers into projects, the transition towards a community-led organisation had only occurred within recent years under Lynn's guidance. Accordingly, notions about the role of leaders or staff members within **Playbusters** varied among volunteers. Text box 2 conveys different views of volunteers on staff members' leadership roles.

1. Swap Shop volunteer Jane reflecting on the active participation of the member of staff managing the Swap Shop	<i>“The Swap Shop, even though Siobhan is staff, she will do as much help as anybody else, and we’re all just really expected to take a bit of responsibility. There’s no like, ‘You do this, you do that.’” - Jane</i>
2. Environment Group volunteer Sinead reflecting on not feeling judged about her own meat eating by the vegetarian members of staff leading the Environment Group	<i>“I remember one week coming in (to the environmental group) and saying, ‘This meat thing is really bothering me, I don’t know how to reduce the meat I eat. I can’t give up chicken.’ And it just so happened that in that group we were talking about food, so we went around the table, and one of the people running the group has never eaten an animal in his life or animal produce, except for milk and butter. And the other was, ‘When I was a little child I thought animals were my friends, and it was wrong to eat my friends, so I’ve never eaten animals either.’ And I felt like maybe I’d insulted them a little, but they know that they are vegetarian and they think it’s the right thing, and other people are not necessarily vegetarian. I don’t know why it has such meaning for me, but I think it’s really good. And I think how I act when people have what seems to me like a belligerent opinion - I think they are very good that way.” - Sinead</i>
3. Community garden volunteer Harry reflecting on the advantage of taking part in projects where staff members are in charge	<i>“You really need one that’s up to date on how you deal with funders and all that kind of thing, and a little control over the situation. People would do anything, you know. They’d wander off. I prefer someone saying, ‘You’re planting that there and that there, that there.’ At least that way we get something done, you know, so, for the food growing and stuff. Because if you leave it to volunteers they can just potter about, drink tea and eating things - you need something stimulating them all the time, you know.” - Harry</i>

*Text box 2: Playbusters - Volunteers on Leadership*

*Source: interview transcripts*

As illustrated in text box 2, volunteers Jane, Sinead and Harry conveyed impressions of staff members championing more sustainable lifestyles while not judging volunteer participants who do not follow the same lifestyles (Sinead), staff members as 'one of us' (Jane), and stating a preference for staff members overseeing projects (Harry). Between them, the three characteristics are crucial for in-group prototype and championship leadership styles, by following different lifestyles than the rest of the group (such as vegetarianism), leading the group activities, yet actively participating in the group.

Beyond individual leadership styles, the organisation **Playbusters** itself acted as an



entrepreneur and embedder of identities that included the promotion of a 'we' feeling around the organisation, of an asset-rich East End, and of greener ways of living, which will be explored further in section 5.4. In the next paragraphs, leadership styles within *Sustaining Dunbar* are explored.

### Case Study 2: *Sustaining Dunbar*

*Sustaining Dunbar* was co-managed by a project co-ordinator (John) and a project facilitator (Grace). John noted that the transformation from a volunteer organisation to a professional organisation upon writing a successful CCF funding application was challenging for *Sustaining Dunbar*. While he, as a founder of the organisation, went through a formal recruitment process, he was still aware that his recruitment “could have led to a break-down in relationships” (Interview: John). Unlike *Playbusters*, which was based in a large city with a large pool of potential employees, *Sustaining Dunbar* was based in a small town, which necessarily meant that there was a limited pool of people interested in sustainability issues who would potentially get involved in the organisation. Almost all of *Sustaining Dunbar*'s staff members lived within or near Dunbar, which means that the organisation created local jobs. This was a significant benefit to the town of Dunbar where, according to Alistair (East Lothian Council), about half of the working population commutes to the nearest city (Edinburgh) for work.

*Sustaining Dunbar* widely consulted with the local community especially in the development of their *Local Resilience Action Plan* and their plans to install a Community Wind Turbine, to ensure that these activities also reflected the wider community's wishes and opinions. *Sustaining Dunbar*'s core organisation strived to support the flourishing of a variety of local community groups that remained independent, to ensure that these local groups can flourish even if the core organisation lost its momentum due to funding constraints in the future. However, within the core organisation, different areas of work that were part of the CCF-project 'Connecting Dunbar' were overseen by a responsible member of staff.

*"Everyone that is involved in leading their own projects, cause there are a*

*number, are also incredibly driven and passionate, but well balanced in terms of their understanding of social implications and environmental implications. ... I call [Sustaining Dunbar] the ship, which is where everyone is taking turns to steer and do different jobs." - Grace*

The levels of responsibility staff members carried for the projects they were working on reflect a shared leadership model that increases the resilience of shared causes by distributing responsibilities.

“Shared leadership takes a more lateral perspective in which leadership is seen as occurring within sub-organisational units. This enables different leaders to emerge as time and circumstances change ” (Jones 2014:131)

Leadership roles within ***Sustaining Dunbar*** were mainly limited to organisational governance by the Board of Directors, and the project co-ordinators who managed the staff team who ran projects on the ground. The leadership styles among staff members differed according to their role in the organisation, exemplified by John, Grace and Cath.

John was a founding member of ***Sustaining Dunbar***. John's vision was instrumental to the direction of SD, yet he strived to remain inclusive in making decisions with other staff members, and stepped away from managerial roles of local community groups once these were largely self-sustaining. John strived to maintain good relationships with local people, wider national community activist networks and the Council. A substantial part of the networking happened outwith working hours, blurring personal and professional roles.

John described himself as a “generalist” who, since he moved to Dunbar, was involved and started a range of sustainability initiatives, such as a school grounds project or Dunbar's Community Woodland group.

*“Through these [environmental initiatives I initiated], I had made quite a lot of*

*different contacts with different people and different organisations in the town and in East Lothian, so with my contacts and the other people that joined together to form Sustaining Dunbar, we had a good network of links with people, I suppose. We weren't starting from scratch.” - John*

John shared the project co-ordination of **Sustaining Dunbar** with Grace, who focused on ensuring that the wider community's opinions informed **Sustaining Dunbar's** objectives. She did this largely by running public consultations and preferred to stay “as neutral as possible” true to her profession as a consultant.

*“John for me is the man with vision and passion with regards to the environmental side of things, so that between the two of us, me being passionate about the social and he about the social and environmental, very much more from an environmental background – I think we drive together quite well. ... But what keeps us on track are focus on what our realistic project objectives are, and if things are not working, changing what those objectives are to make them more realistic.” - Grace*

The SD ethos of **Sustaining Dunbar** was also reflected within the Board of Directors. Cath joined the Board “for critical mass” due to her wide-ranging experience in the field of sustainable buildings and management. At the time of interviewing, she planned to step down from the Board to focus on her work. Her view on governance was systemic and included individual, regional and national levels.

*“I think having the action plan with Sustaining Dunbar in place, and having got strong links with the Council in terms of embedding the thinking and getting support for the wide range and objectives - it's very hard to argue with the objective of having a local resilient economy which is robust to the impact of peak oil and the climate change as a principle, so it's really drilling down and seeing where those different components are dealt with in communities, you know, at what level - whether it's at, you know, individual level or street level or community level, town level, ward level, council level - so there's a place for everybody to do*

*something. And some of it is dependent on national legislation and national policy, and that's where I think in Scotland it's very good having the support and the objectives and the targets, because that gives a context, a validity I guess, to all of this. It's not just personal crank, as it used to be twenty years ago.” - Cath*

While John was mainly a networker, fundraiser and visionary, Grace helped embed the organisation's identity within the wider townscape. Meanwhile, Board member Cath's knowledge of environmental governance suggested a high degree of sustainability literacy within **Sustaining Dunbar's** leadership behind the scenes. John's leadership role in particular was primarily about identity entrepreneurship within **Sustaining Dunbar**, evident through Grace's comment that he was the “man with the vision”. He was backed up by a Board of Directors which affirmed the action plan. Meanwhile, Grace served as an embedder of identity, who sought the local community's buy-in for **Sustaining Dunbar's** work through public consultations, the results of which informed the organisation's direction. Given **Sustaining Dunbar** worked with independent and semi-independent community groups, in relation to whom its leadership status was less than clear, the organisational emphasis is best defined in terms of identity entrepreneurship and identity embedding. In contrast to an organisation such as **Playbusters**, which operated within the entire East End but whose focus was on the people volunteering for the organisation and for whom in-group prototypical and championship aspects were crucial, **Sustaining Dunbar's** strategic visionary role in the local community meant that the definition of its 'in-group' was limited to its staff members. However, the ambition of the organisation was not limited to its own staff team, but its community governance aspirations included the entire town of Dunbar and East Lothian's electoral Ward 7<sup>25</sup>.

The Dunbar residents among the core staff team were all in a limited sense 'in-group prototypes and champions', belonging to the town as 'some of us' while being clear about their transformational aspirations of crafting and embedding 'greener' lifestyles at the very least in their work practice, and often also in their private lives. However,

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25 East Lothian has seven electoral wards: Musselburgh West, Musselburgh East and Carberry, Preston/ Seton/ Gosford, Fa'side, North Berwick Coastal, Haddington and Lammermuir, and Dunbar and East Linton. Each of these wards elected three or four members of the local council. With a population of 97,500 and an area of 679 km<sup>2</sup>, East Lothian is a relatively small Scottish local authority area compared to, for example, its northerly neighbour Fife (population 365,020, area 1,325 km<sup>2</sup>) or Glasgow City (population 592,820, area 175 km<sup>2</sup>), where **Playbusters** was located.

*Sustaining Dunbar* received some negative reception by local people and in some media outlets, who thought that *Sustaining Dunbar* was backed by the Scottish National Party<sup>26</sup> (Howarth 2012) and citing “online dissent” (Copland 2012) at the time of concluding research in relation to a consultation where the majority of respondents supported the erection of a community wind turbine (Copland 2012)<sup>27</sup>. This suggests that *Sustaining Dunbar* was seen by some as an organisation with a distinct in-group identity that 'other' to that of those who did not share the worldview and aims of the group - or who, at the very least, opposed the proposed community wind turbine.

Staff members acknowledged the need to ensure transparency where personal and professional interests may potentially overlap (Interview: John), even though the organisation was run democratically, and meetings such as the AGM were open to the public. However, there appeared to be some underlying demographical issues. One staff member commented that the population of Dunbar could be roughly divided into two kinds of people – people whose families had been resident across several generations, and 'newcomers' who may have moved to Dunbar either recently or several decades ago (Interview: Ben). The core group of *Sustaining Dunbar* was exclusively made up of the latter kind.

*“There’s ‘Old Dunbar’ and ‘New Dunbar’; this is ‘Old Dunbar’. I’m New Dunbar (laughs) because I don’t come from here. Our neighbours have all lived here since [the street] was built in 1936. Quite a lot of people and this family at the end there, they’ve been in that house there since 1936 - so it’s great grandfather,*

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26 The pro-independence Scottish National Party had at the time of research been elected to lead East Lothian Council. Since fieldwork took place in the years leading up to Scotland's independence referendum (18th September 2014), it was inevitable that occasionally, national politics would be brought up in relations to community organisations. Anecdotal evidence indicated that some Scottish National Party-members or councillors volunteered within or supported some of the community groups (*East Kilbride Development Trust, Playbusters, Sustaining Dunbar*); however, *Playbusters'* swap shop was opened by a councillor of the Scottish Green Party. These occurrences do not suggest that community organisations endorsed particular parties, however.

27 While negative press coverage may suggest nothing substantial beyond the editorial direction of the media outlet, a small number of local people also questioned *Sustaining Dunbar's* motives in the local media comments section:

*“Not only do the subsidy junkies at Sustaining dunbar [sic] still believe in Man Made Global Warming, which has been totally discredited ... . They now appear to be happy to adopt Stalinist style self deception in order to justify their follies. Why can they not just go back to where they came from and ruin ther [sic] own back yard. This is the behaviour of a bunch of white settlers at it's [sic] worst.”*  
(Comment by reader 'concerned resident' on Copland's 2012 article)

*grandfather, father, son and daughters or whatever, and they just live there. And the people next door to us have been there since the 1930s as well.” - Duncan*

There also appeared to be a perception or a tendency that the 'new' residents who moved to Dunbar had a relatively high income (Interview: Fiona), and that there had been an influx of middle class people (Interview: John). This indicates that Dunbar used to be a less affluent town that had undergone a process of gentrification. This is significant, because sustainability efforts have been linked to 'ecological gentrification' at least in urban neighbourhoods, whereby "long-time and vulnerable residents are negatively affected by ... sustainability efforts" (Pearsall 2012:1013). It appears that in Dunbar, the gentrification process preceded the environmental initiatives. However, recent experiences of gentrification may have produced local sensitivities about activities that can be associated with gentrification, such as sustainability efforts.

Within its team of staff members, working for ***Sustaining Dunbar*** involved a personal commitment as well as a professional one, with staff members exemplifying sustainable lifestyles. For example, one of the transport co-ordinators did not own a car. Within 'remote small towns' such as Dunbar, only 27% of the population does not have access to a car, which is slightly lower than the average figure of the population (30%) who do not have access to a car (Scottish Government 2011). Furthermore, ***Sustaining Dunbar's*** office was scarcely heated even in the winter, and there appeared to be an implicit ethos of embodying organisational values, or 'embedding identity', among staff members. However, embedding the organisation's identity did not necessarily include a green self-image. Some staff members distanced themselves from an environmentalist identity to some extent (Interview: Grace, Fiona), which will be further explored in chapter 6.

Insofar as ***Sustaining Dunbar's*** stated aims pointed less towards achieving a critical mass of membership and more towards providing a local route map which could be put in place once the global social, economic and environmental crises have become more clearly noticeable, the organisation was achieving its aims. How far ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was able to translate its strategic visioning into influencing the Council and the CPP was

limited to the extent that civil servants and politicians were willing to accept their guidance. Some civil servants, in their capacities as local authority workers as well as prominent members of the CPP, voiced their doubts that localised strategies, such as **Sustaining Dunbar's** Local Resilience Action Plan (LRAP), could be influential on a county-wide scale (Interview: Vicky).

*"None of the Transition groups has any – you know, they can ask, but they can't make the Council do anything. I think that will change, but until that time. ... [Community groups] can act as consultants, but you can go back to the [Community Planning] Partnership and say, these things have come out of it. But whether the Partnership decides to pursue something at a certain time – it may not be within their capabilities." - Vicky*

Nevertheless, one civil servant thought that **Sustaining Dunbar's** work was at the “cutting edge” of sustainability practices (Interview: Donald). Overall, it appeared that some civil servants and politicians were willing to work closely with the community organisation, but some of **Sustaining Dunbar's** aims appeared to be not fully accepted by all officials. The issue of community governance for sustainability will be explored more in-depth in section 5.5.

**Playbusters** and **Sustaining Dunbar** present two very different cases of leadership styles within community organisations. **Playbusters**, an organisation primarily run with the goal to improve the personal well-being of local residents who are affected by structural deprivations, cared strongly about construing its organisational leadership in terms of in-group prototypes and champions, as well as a more outward-facing identity entrepreneurship and embedding. Furthermore, **Playbusters'** leadership style in the relations between staff members and volunteers, according to staff members' comments (Interviews: Sam, Lynn), displayed some characteristics of servant leadership, placing importance on the suggestions and interests of volunteers ('follower needs') in order to develop new projects. However, within the staff team itself, the leadership style of **Playbusters'** project manager Lynn, who led the team of staff members (the 'followers' in this context), also had some transformational characteristics. This is because the

organisation's purpose (to offer opportunities to local people) was the guiding principle within the staff team, rather than Lynn's personal ideas. In other words, the leadership styles within the organisation depended on whether the leader-follower relationship played out within the staff team only (displaying characteristics of transformational leadership), or between staff members and volunteers within individual projects (displaying servant leadership characteristics).

In contrast, ***Sustaining Dunbar***, an organisation primarily focused on systemic community-level sustainability governance in the local region, spent less time on 'exemplifying the in-group', because while the 'in-group' (the organisation) worked with local residents, regular group activities were not the organisation's main focus. Instead, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was more purpose-driven, guided by the Board of Directors and by the project co-ordinators who set organisational goals, the pursuit of which – if it plays a central role in the leadership culture of the organisation – is one characteristic of transformational leadership (Van Dierendonck et al. 2014:545). Furthermore, ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s leadership style exhibited a higher degree of informality than ***Playbusters***', because some of the networking happened in the 'leisure time' of staff members at events in town. The challenge of democratic accountability was exemplified in some local residents' resistance to the notion that ***Sustaining Dunbar*** represented their community.

"Over-reliance on personal connections can ... distort the representative's judgement in favour of the view of like-minded people whereby minority or unpopular experiences are overlooked or suppressed. More formal democratic structures are needed which are open to all members of the relevant community."  
(Banks 2003:41)

However, the oppositional voices rose precisely when ***Sustaining Dunbar*** engaged in local democratic activities, namely conducting a community consultation. The main challenge may be the blurred boundaries of a 'high-grid' community organisation which engages in regional sustainability governance. In contrast, ***Playbusters*** spent much organisational effort on offering leisure activities, as well as volunteer jobs, but as an



organisation it was strictly professional and activities were restricted to working hours. *Playbusters'* leadership style thus was more formally defined, focusing primarily on working with the community of volunteers by whom the organisation can be held accountable.

The aim of this section was not to characterise one project as more effective than another. Indeed, the data suggests that the leadership styles generally grew out of and responded to demographic and geographic characteristics. Challenges found in community organisations' wider localities, such as multiple deprivation, gentrification or 'closed' communities such as those restricted by geographies of remoteness (which, as has been described above, is at the same time an advantage) may be mirrored to some extent in the challenges faced by the community organisations. The balance between the 'four rules' to effective leadership varied between community organisations. In some organisations a distributed leadership pattern helped to satisfy different roles of leadership (as exemplified most strongly in *Playbusters* as 'the organisation' and associated leadership structures could refer to the staff team only, or the staff team and volunteers). The two community organisations' leadership styles each had their strength and weaknesses in the twin challenges of engaging people in their projects and fulfilling the organisation's aims, which in the CCF-funded part of the programmes involved aspects of SD. There was a tendency for *Playbusters* to display characteristics of transformational leadership, as manifested in the organisation's manager Lynn, and characteristics of servant leadership, as manifested in the co-ordinators of particular projects. Meanwhile, *Sustaining Dunbar's* leadership style had primarily transformational characteristics. The issues of leadership styles, engagement and promoting sustainable practices are closely related to sustainability governance, which will be further explored in section 5.4.

## 5.3 The Role of Volunteering

Some case studies involved volunteers in the projects more than others, but common to all was that volunteering played a role either in the organisation itself, or in the case of *Sustaining Dunbar*, in their partner organisations. This section investigates how 'volunteering' is defined, some aspects of the role of volunteering more broadly in the United Kingdom, and specifically in Scotland, and volunteering as a contested notion in a precarious economic climate, before examining the differing roles volunteering played in the case studies. The three main roles of volunteers identified in the case studies were a) crucial involvement in the running of the project (such as volunteers serving on the Board of Directors, or directly helping to build the project), b) service usage (where the project serves the volunteer, offering a range of opportunities which volunteers should benefit from in terms of skills development), c) partnerships with or loose affiliations to the project (volunteers offering their time to enhance the project through networking or non-essential tasks). However, these roles are not mutually exclusive, and quite frequently the roles of volunteers in one project would encompass two or more of these.

A volunteer is defined as “one who voluntarily offers his [sic] services in any capacity; one who of his [sic] own free will takes part in any enterprise” (OED 2014c). Generally, volunteering is portrayed as a virtuous, positive activity by the Scottish Government.

“Volunteering is the giving of time and energy through a third party, which can bring measurable benefits to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups and organisations, communities, environment and society at large. It is a choice undertaken of one’s own free will, and is not motivated primarily for financial gain or for a wage or salary.” (Scottish Executive 2004)

There is a broad overlap between community organisations and the third sector or voluntary sector, although the term 'voluntary sector' has a nuanced meaning. The voluntary sector in Scotland is defined as referring to organisations that have “a formal constitution, are independent, do not distribute profits, and are governed by non-paid volunteers” (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations 1997:9). However, there are

specific characteristics to organisations that are part of the voluntary sector in the sense that “services may be delivered and aims achieved by volunteers on the ground but ... there is often, in between, a layer of professional management and expertise” (Scottish Council for Voluntary organisations 1997:9). In other words, 'voluntary sector' refers to groups that have a degree of professional structure, and does not usually include informal groups and associations.

In Britain, the history of the voluntary sector is intertwined with that of the welfare state. Gladstone et al. (1999) write that as other modern states, Britain has always “had a mixed economy of welfare, in which the state, the voluntary sector, the family and the market have played different parts at different points in time” (10). It has been noted that the voluntary sector organisations in Scotland was more likely (12% compared with 3%) to rely on government funding for around 60% of their income than voluntary sector organisations in England (Vincent & Harrow 2005:384). It therefore appears that overall, the Scottish Government supports voluntary activity more than the British Government.

The Scottish Government has encouraged volunteering through a wide range of policy initiatives (Fyfe 2006:631) and claimed that “action to support volunteering is action to tackle poverty and disadvantage” (Scottish Executive 2004). However, volunteering is a contested concept, and due to the lack of material rewards from volunteering, the experience of volunteering is context specific (Nichols & Ralston 2012). Some suggest that states view voluntary activity and the third sector as a "panacea" (Fyfe 2005) to a wide range of problems, amidst “concerns about declining political participation, anxieties about meeting welfare needs, and worries about the meaning of citizenship” (Fyfe 2006:632). Fyfe (2006) found that the Scottish Government devises “strategies designed to increase levels of volunteering as a means of empowering communities to take responsibility for their social welfare” (633). Fyfe's (2006) observation suggests that the Scottish Government appeared to be predisposed to encourage both volunteering and community empowerment, and through the CCF not only for social but also for 'environmental welfare'.

Another reason why volunteering is a contested notion is that support for groups that rely on voluntary activity tends to disadvantage more deprived areas. Across European countries, it has been found that “higher inequality is associated with lower civic participation” (Lancee & Van de Werfhorst 2012:1166). While civic participation is not synonymous with volunteering, in the United Kingdom, similar patterns have been identified in relation to the rate of participation in formal and informal community groups: only “14% of people participated in groups in the last three years in the most deprived wards compared with 29% of the population in the most affluent wards” (Williams 2003:535). In other words, supporting a culture of voluntarism might exacerbate pre-existing inequalities, because groups operating within areas that are already more affluent are likely to attract larger numbers of volunteers than groups operating within areas that are more deprived. In the following paragraphs, I describe patterns of volunteering within two case studies, and reference a third one.

#### Case Study 1: **Playbusters**

**Playbusters'** organisational structure was characteristic of the voluntary sector. Beyond the most basic characteristic of being run by a voluntary Board of Directors, the organisation also provided a structured professional framework for the engagement of volunteers. There were boundaries between staff and volunteers, who did not usually socialise outside of working hours.

The role of volunteers within **Playbusters** is best approached through my own experience, because during fieldwork in the organisation I held a dual position as a volunteer and researcher. When I started the fieldwork, I went through a formal volunteer induction, since the project manager and I agreed that volunteering was to form the back bone of my engagement with the project. In my field notes from the induction event, which took place in the seminar room adjacent to **Playbusters'** office, I noted that the wall behind the table displayed photos of young **Playbusters** volunteers, proudly holding awards such as 'Green Ambassador', 'Scottish Green List', 'Voscar' or 'Community champion' [Field notes, **Playbusters**, 27.5.2011]. Some of these awards were designed by **Playbusters**, others by external organisations. Heather, the volunteer

co-ordinator, explained that **Playbusters** celebrates “good things” and achievements of volunteers, partly because the organisation's ethos emphasised personal development, and partly to combat the negative press coverage of Glasgow's East End.

The induction of new volunteers was conducted in a professional, organised manner, and involved the handing over of accessories which identified the volunteer as part of the **Playbusters** team, cementing the in-group identity.

*“I received a badge with my name and my photo, and a Playbusters T-shirt where I could pick the colour (I picked orange). 'Heather' told me that this was so volunteers could be easily identified when working in the community.”* - [Excerpt from field notes, **Playbusters**, 27.5.2011]

Volunteers were individually supported by Heather, the volunteer co-ordinator, whose role included inducting new volunteers, and who aimed to ensure that the volunteers' needs were met in an ongoing manner. When interviewed, Heather described the aim of the organisation as “delivering services”, offering a range of activities to enhance the psychological and physical well-being of participants. However, staff members generally referred to volunteers not as service users, but simply as “volunteers”. Certain funding decisions allowed the initially small organisation to deliver services across different parts of Glasgow's East End and attract volunteers from these different areas (Interview: Heather). Staff member Sam stressed that there was no typical pattern in terms of how people volunteered, but that individual participants engaged with the project in a variety of ways; some participants engaged with “everything” and volunteered many hours a week, almost akin to a part-time job. Every time a new project was started, a call-out was issued among existing volunteers to work on new projects. As a result, some individuals volunteered for several of **Playbusters** projects. **Playbusters** won a volunteer-friendly award which recognised the successful engagement of volunteers, fair and equal volunteering and celebrating volunteers' contributions (Playbusters, no date-a). The award criteria reflected my experiences with the organisation during fieldwork, when I attended ceremonies where the contributions of volunteers were celebrated socially and through personalised certificates.

**Playbusters** was community-led not only through its volunteer board members, but also in the design of new projects. While funding applications tended to be written by members of staff, volunteers were involved in the design of projects early on. Some ideas for new projects came from volunteers during some of the activities, and some of the environmental projects in particular had been developed in response to the active interests of volunteers (Interviews: Caitlin, Heather, Sam). The environmental activities which led to the CCF-funding bid for GGWGEE had gradually grown out of the suggestions volunteers had made, and interests they had shown. The various projects run under the umbrella of GGWGEE were therefore said to have grown largely out of volunteer-led suggestions; for example, the swap shop 'Simply Swap' evolved out of a mixture of suggestions by staff members and interest of volunteers (Interview: Sam). Other projects, such as community gardens, were tended to by a mixture of **Playbusters** volunteers and volunteers from other organisations (Interview: Caitlin). **Playbusters** emphasised that volunteers should have real ownership over some projects (Interview: Sam); however, this was subject to some restrictions. For example, while volunteers expressed the wish to have the swap shop open for several days a week, this would require staff members to be on stand-by. The restricted hours of staff members' availability, and their unavailability at weekends, limited the shop's opening hours.

It seemed that over time, the role of volunteers within the organisation had changed. Initially there seemed to be more reliance on individual volunteers to contribute to the organisation on an *ad hoc* basis (Interview: Derek). Successful funding applications brought with them the responsibility of delivering what was applied for, so volunteers were sought out for specific projects which each had their own job description. Derek, a volunteer of pension age, had volunteered for **Playbusters** for a number of years, was active for the organisation at least two to three times a week, and also served on the Board of Directors. He remembered the time he was asked to effectively run parts of the organisation's projects.

*“They acquired a greenhouse and an allotment, and they asked - could I build the greenhouse? - Aye, probably! I then had no intentions or any thoughts about*

*taking part in an allotment. So that came about - I built the greenhouse and went back and Lynn surprised me with the fact that I would be running it (laughs). ... It's one of the best decisions I've made, because I was an outdoor person, I was always out on the hills and walking and camping and - so it was ideal for me. Because by this time I had retired, and it was either sit in the house, watching the telly, or being out in the fresh air. And the fresh air's got to win there all the time, as far as I'm concerned. So I've been doon the allotment now, running that for almost three years. We had various volunteers come and go - some like it, some don't, which is fair. But there's a wee kind of a - well I believe that if you've got a wee hard core of about half a dozen workers that can come at different times, that's sufficient for running the allotment, the size it was." - Derek*

Derek also explained that it was important to ensure that the volunteers felt rewarded for their work. He deliberately chose to sow vegetables that were easy to grow - to get good results and to avoid disappointments - in order to retain volunteers. The **Playbusters** allotment had also won a few prizes, which he hoped would encourage volunteers to remain involved. In his capacity as a volunteer, Derek found volunteering for **Playbusters** inherently rewarding in a range of ways. He explained that as a result of volunteering, he often would meet children in the streets who he had worked with at **Playbusters**, and they would greet each other.

*"From my point of view, as a volunteer, ... I'm at a stage now where I'm very happy and, you see, I'm still quite fit. And that's due to being part of Playbusters, and being involved with a lot of kids in the East End." - Derek*

Other volunteers got involved for a variety of reasons – these included “testing the waters” in community work while looking for a job (Mary), working and getting to know Scottish society while applying for a work permit (Rahim), or bridging a transition into paid work (Noemi, Anton).

Helen, a woman in her late thirties, had volunteered for **Playbusters** approximately for one year, and had been involved with a range of projects. At the time of research, she

focused on volunteering in 'Simply Swap', which **Playbusters** staff members “successfully put ... together with the volunteers' help” (Helen). Helen's mother, her niece, and occasionally her sister were also **Playbusters** volunteers and frequently volunteered in the same projects. Helen described her involvement with **Playbusters** as a diverse, stimulating and ultimately rewarding experience, where she felt part of a team in a non-judgemental atmosphere and could choose from a variety of projects to get involved in.

*“I was awarded last year the Community Champions award. I was put forward for it and ... I knew nothing of it. ... I was so overwhelmed that the staff and the volunteers had put my name forward; ... I feel as if now I'm the face of Playbusters! ... It's definitely worthwhile to become a volunteer. Because if you've been unemployed for a while and you think your self-esteem has went down because your confidence has went down, you're thinking 'where do I go from here?', you can get the rebuild and the experience, and retrain myself. This is a perfect example, again, with the choices we've got, there's something to suit everybody and they certainly make you feel a valid member of the team and your experiences will be worthwhile, definitely.” - Helen*

Overall, Helen believed that volunteering for **Playbusters** had given her and those of her family members who volunteered alongside her more confidence. The empowerment of volunteers was central to **Playbusters'** organisational purpose. Staff member Sam explained that many of **Playbusters'** volunteers were referred to them by different agencies that have been working with them. He emphasised that many of them had been excluded from society and been told that they were “not good enough”, that “they're not gonna succeed, they're not gonna get a job even though they're being told at the same time, 'you have to get a job', even though there's no jobs”. Sam had observed people change over the course of time of their involvement with **Playbusters**.

*“In these last couple of months actually with the swap shop, we've seen quite a lot of the volunteers that were involved in that are really – they started off really quite quiet and maybe without a lot of confidence, certainly in group situations.*



*... It's amazing, it's fantastic, they really got a lot more confidence and really participate in the group. And that's something that does take a lot of time.” - Sam*

Volunteers were not only recognised and rewarded as individual, but also as teams, emphasising the collective nature of **Playbusters'** activities. For example, the swap shop team won one of the Grow Green Awards at **Playbusters'** awards ceremony.



*Illustration 5: Playbusters - 'Grow Green Awards' Ceremony 2012*



*Illustration 6: 'Grow Green' Award Display in 'Simply Swap'*

The recognition volunteers received stood in contrast to some of their everyday experiences outwith their participation in **Playbusters**. Helen, Derek and Harry all stated that the most likely alternative to volunteering was to sit in front of the television or play computer games. Helen enjoyed learning and having knowledge passed on from the older generation. However, Helen conveyed mixed feelings about the **Playbusters** community clean-up she had been involved in. On the one hand, she praised the voluntary effort to keep the community tidy and clean, the respect the children gained from participating in the clean-up, and she bemoaned that not more members of the community participate in keeping the area clean. On the other hand, she thought that the children who were involved in the community clean-up were really doing the council's job (Interview: Helen). In relation to her own feelings, Helen pointed out a local stigma around volunteering:

*“Wi' the volunteering sector, people will just say that's an excuse to do someone else's job for them, but it's not really. Because you wouldn't be a part of that volunteering group if you didn't want to be.” - Helen*

Helen's views reflect a tension around positive and negative aspects of the notion of volunteering which is reflected in the literature around voluntarism and the welfare state, and which reappears within **Sustaining Dunbar**.

### Case Study 2: **Sustaining Dunbar**

The organisational emphasis of **Sustaining Dunbar** was to professionally work on strategies that could future-proof the region, and less so on recruiting and supporting volunteers within the core group and the activities taken forward under the CCF umbrella. Nevertheless, volunteering played a significant role in the governance of **Sustaining Dunbar**, and within some local groups who were frequent collaborators. **Sustaining Dunbar's** governing Board of Directors consisted of volunteers, and volunteers worked for the semi-independent community groups supported or projects “spawned” (Interview: John) by or associated with **Sustaining Dunbar**, such as the 'Car Club' or the 'Community Woodland Group'. Beyond that, the most common form of

engagement with **Sustaining Dunbar** appeared to be local residents using the organisation's services offered such as 'Dr Bike' or the energy audits, taking part in consultations, or going to **Sustaining Dunbar's** public events such as film screenings.



*Illustration 7: Sustaining Dunbar - 'Dr Bike' Pop-up Bicycle Repair Station*

The professionalisation of the core organisation **Sustaining Dunbar** was directly linked to successfully applying to the CCF, which enabled the employment of members of staff. However, the organisation existed in a voluntary capacity in its pre-professional incarnation, and staff members thought that it could become voluntary again if it was necessary.

*“The worst case scenario is that we won't get continuation funding after March, and we won't have managed to generate enough income to keep our staff, and we have to shed all the employed staff and just carry on just as a voluntary organisation - until we do have income to employ people again. And hopefully we're now a strong enough organisation to be able to still continue in that situation, but it'll be a lot more difficult, and we'd be losing a lot of expertise which we've built up in the staff team.” - John*



The lack of involvement of volunteers in ***Sustaining Dunbar*** as an organisation, beyond the legally required roles on the Board, was related to organisational aims and objectives. Aims described in ***Sustaining Dunbar's*** constitution included “to relieve those in need by the promotion of trade and industry within the Community for the benefit of the general public, ... “to encourage, stimulate and support volunteering principally in the community [and] the promotion of civic responsibility and the promotion of the voluntary sector” (Sustaining Dunbar 2006). Hence, the organisation emphasised the creation of more 'green jobs' (as an ultimate aim) at least to the same, or to a greater extent as volunteering. Furthermore, project facilitator Grace rejected the notion that the projects should be run by volunteers out of principle.

*“I think a lot of people do volunteer their time – constantly, in many aspects of their lives. ...It’s relentless, the volunteering demands that we have on us as a population just now. I personally feel that people should be paid for the time they put in making other people’s lives and locality a better place to be. I think that, you know, if people are hired to do a job within a local authority, then why should people outside the local authority be expected to do the job for them? It’s fine to give them, you know, opportunities to participate as and when they wish to, for whatever reasons they’ve got, but to expect change to occur based on a volunteer so-called 'workforce' is a model that I don’t think is going to fly in this economic climate. And especially with the barriers that exist in terms of social benefits.” - Grace*

Beyond questioning that volunteering should a prominent role within ***Sustaining Dunbar***, Grace praised the professional nature of the organisation. She stated that the local employment enriched her quality of life, and noted that the flexible nature of her part-time job was supportive of her role as a single mother, and that she was glad to be included in a local organisation which she may not have been able to dedicate time to in a voluntary capacity.

How do patterns of volunteering compare between the case studies? In ***Sustaining Dunbar***, Grace's notion of volunteering as doing the local authority's “job for them”

mirrored Helen's comment in *Playbusters*. However, Grace's comment about volunteering being a part of life, and Helen's comment about volunteering being seen as doing the council's job and thus carrying a certain stigma, point towards the possibility of different volunteering cultures in both areas. Some of the patterns reappear elsewhere, in *East Kilbride Development Trust*.

Project participants' decision to not employ any staff members was part of *East Kilbride Development Trust*'s ambition to remain a voluntary group, although not everyone agreed with that decision at all times.

*"I see too many projects in what I call the voluntary sector, and there's hardly any volunteers in them. All the work's done by staff that are paid. [...] That's also another reason why things fall on their arse if the funding dries up. ... Our projects won't fall on their arse."* - Stewart

Since the main decision makers were in full-time employment, the project took place in their leisure time - generally, work meetings were held at weekends. Because some of the most devoted volunteers were retired men, at one public event the project sought to recruit specifically retired men. Finally, the volunteer management was itself done on a voluntary basis, and some members commented that it could be difficult to attract new volunteers.

*"The committee is the initial core that stayed the same [...] We don't have many volunteers; I don't know who's on the email list - around 40 or 50 people... . Since we got the gardening project, we've had more volunteers. A lot of people want to volunteer, but want an established project. Maybe when it's more established, we'll have more volunteers because it's a community garden."* - Liz

*Text box 3: Cross Cut: East Kilbride Development Trust - Volunteering*

Within *East Kilbride Development Trust* (see text box 3), volunteering was seen as aspirational, while at the same time it appeared more difficult to attract volunteers than in *Playbusters*, with the presence of a paid volunteer co-ordinator. This suggests a tension between the ideal and practice of volunteering - which was further highlighted when in *East Kilbride Development Trust*, the personal circumstances of some key volunteers changed, and their availability to dedicate time to the project was restricted accordingly.

Because of the difference in demographics between the two case studies, with Dunbar being significantly more affluent than Glasgow's East End, it is worth noting that inequalities impact on volunteering patterns. Williams (2003) found that in deprived areas, fewer people tend to participate in local groups than in more affluent areas (535). Paradoxically, among the two main case studies, *Playbusters*, who were based in an

area with higher levels of deprivation placed more of an emphasis on volunteering than *Sustaining Dunbar*, who were based in a more affluent area. However, this appeared to reflect primarily *Playbusters*' more formalised approach to volunteering. Overall, around 80 volunteers were registered with *Playbusters* at the time of research [Field notes, *Playbusters*, 4.7.2011], whereas the number of volunteers within all community organisations which had links to *Sustaining Dunbar* was unknown.

According to Wilkinson and Pickett (2011), research indicates that people with higher education levels are more likely to volunteer (103). Out of all people aged 16 and over, in *Playbusters*' Ward Calton, 35% have no qualifications, whereas in Dunbar and East Linton's electoral ward, 23% have no qualifications (*Source: Scotland's Census 2011*). Therefore we might expect more voluntary activity to take place in Dunbar than in Glasgow's East End; however, the data neither affirms nor rejects this expectation.

In summary, the topic of volunteering within community organisations opens up a number of issues. Evidence from interviews with volunteers at *Playbusters* suggests that there were numerous intangible benefits to improving the participants' quality of life in the short term. However, some responses, which were mirrored among *Sustaining Dunbar's* staff members, indicated a tension between volunteering as a positive, beneficial activity, and volunteering as a form of organising work which fails to create jobs, or involves “doing somebody else's job”, without tackling economic inequalities or unemployment. The next section inquires into the aims and purposes of community organisations with respect to some of these wider, systematic issues, including their potential role in sustainability governance.

## **5.4 Discussion: Community Projects and Local Sustainability Governance**

The previous sections have discussed organisational structures, leadership styles and roles of volunteers in community organisations in general, and within the case studies in particular. This section will elaborate on some of the findings in relation to community organisations as agents of sustainability governance. The organisational structures, use of volunteers, and leadership styles within community organisations all contribute to the nature of roles community projects play in local sustainability governance, but these roles are 'messy' and contextually determined. Extending governance to non-state actors is deemed by some commentators as inevitable, and “the resulting shift from government to governance has opened up new spaces into which communities have been invited alongside other actors, offering opportunities for partnership and dialogue in addressing community needs” (Taylor 2008:332-333). As previously mentioned, increased governmental support for community projects that tackle climate change could be symptomatic of neoliberalisation and a scaling-down of the welfare state. At the same time, the emergence of community organisations as sustainability actors opens up new spaces of governance. Given that community organisations for sustainability in the forms exemplified through the CCF are a relatively recent and innovative phenomenon, such a paradox should not be surprising.

“Governance innovations designed to produce more effective and sustainable outcomes very often fall short of their anticipated outcomes due to their ‘messiness’, complexity, hybridity and unevenness.” (Griffin 2010:369).

As discussed in section 2.5, community projects are situated between the local authority and individual households within ecological systems; they constitute a level of engagement which emphasise the collective but are not major players on the scale of national or international politics. Community organisations therefore fall into the realm of governance innovation, but the nature of their governance approach, as well who or what they govern, varies between organisations. The 'four rules' of effective leadership manifested themselves differently through individuals that held leadership roles within

the case studies but, as section 5.2 alluded to, the 'four rules' may also be expressed through the collective identity of a community organisation through collective governance and shared leadership within its location.

Beyond the organisational and leadership structures community organisations use to 'govern themselves', to what extent do the organisations from which the case studies are drawn constitute governing agents of sustainability issues in their wider localities? An analysis of the case study findings suggests that their capacities of sustainability governance were expressed in three ways: a) amongst project participants, volunteers and service users, through the promotion of sustainable practices and 'commons thinking', b) in their wider localities by adopting an advising role, in interactions with governing institutions such as the local authority, and c) in their vision, the practical manifestation of which is hindered by significant external barriers. These three ways are unpicked in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, community organisations which expressed 'high-group' characteristics and where leadership styles included an emphasis on 'in-group' prototypical and championship characteristics (such as *Playbusters*) engaged their participants collectively in projects such as community gardens, swap shops, and making crafts from recycled materials. In terms of expressing sustainability governance through the promotion of sustainable practices in these projects, case studies instigated individual behaviour change practices such as waste reduction, changes in diet, consumption and energy use (this will be explored in chapter 6).

As a 'high-grid' community organisation, *Sustaining Dunbar* reached out to service users and semi-independent community groups, but the focus was more on enabling sustainable practices (such as energy saving, renewable energy installation, and supporting the development of a community bakery) than on collectively engaging participants in these practices. However, since 'high-grid' and 'high-group' characteristics were located on a spectrum, many activities within the case studies straddled both domains – for example, educational activities around waste and recycling which emphasised group learning also had individual behaviour change as a desired outcome,



and various events (such as, in *Sustaining Dunbar*, shared local meals and film screenings) had a strong social element but depending on the content may also emphasise individual responsibilities.

Additionally, the case studies emphasised to different degrees some kind of collective assets, development or management. Examples of such activities include community gardens, community woodlands and community energy generation. Rather than emphasising individual outcomes, these collective activities required project participants to think more widely about shared responsibilities and co-ownership, a glimpse of a “commons way of thinking”, defined as finding ways to ensure that our well-being ensures the well-being of others (Kenrick 2009:52). However, with the exception of an asset which was brought into community ownership through long-term processes (Dunbar Community Woodland), real co-ownership did not feature within the case studies.



*Illustration 8: Dunbar Community Woodland Group*

The rarity of community-owned assets means that commons thinking, where it emerged, remained restricted to 'projects' (such as a community garden, swap shop etc) rather

than maturing through long-term asset management which would require the careful construction of collective institutions to manage common assets in Ostrom's (1990) sense.

Secondly, in terms of adopting an advising role in their wider localities, the projects differed in their remits, as illustrated through a short juxtaposition of the two principal case studies. **Playbusters** was successful because it set a remit around where it could and where it could not make a difference. By having a formalised organisational set-up where staff members, as leaders, offered activities to volunteers and local residents, responding to 'follower' needs, the organisation could make a difference in the personal lives of participants. **Playbusters** could perhaps make less of a difference in transforming the East End into a place which would give its residents more facilities, a better infrastructure and more job opportunities. When asked about what it was like to tackle climate change in a deprived area, **Playbusters** project manager Lynn admitted that it was difficult, as environmental issues were not high up on the scale of local priorities. However, the knowledge generated through the projects themselves did percolate beyond the immediate group of participants, for example through articles in the local newspaper 'Re-Gen' or through collaborations with campaigning organisations.

*“[Tackling climate change in an area affected by multiple deprivation] is a challenge, but I think it's one that's being taken up. But other parts of it will need to be taken up by other agencies, whether that's the council or other organisations or, y'know, saving energy, waste management, all of that. I think having very effective volunteers who are almost ambassadors for the cause, and also the young people that are taking up that challenge as well, I think eventually that will happen because there'll be more lobbying at different levels taking place. But certainly more of a dialogue, and I think that will continue.” - Lynn*

In contrast, as a 'high-grid' organisation which emphasised a visionary, entrepreneuring identity as part of their leadership style, **Sustaining Dunbar**'s influence on the current leadership of East Lothian Council was significant. Alistair, the leader of East Lothian Council, supported the initiative to work towards establishing a 'Transition County', an

aim which was included in East Lothian Council's Single Outcome Agreement (this is explored in chapter 6). Staff members within the CPP were actively supporting the emergence of at least one other Transition Group (Musselburgh). However, ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s influence was vulnerable to bureaucratic specifications, according to which it was difficult for groups with a remit specific to an electoral ward to gain direct input into the East Lothian-wide CPP theme groups. East Lothian CPP staff member Vicky's statement that 'Transition groups' (such as ***Sustaining Dunbar***) "can't make the Council do anything" suggests that the bureaucratic mechanisms of the Council and the CPP struggled to categorise community organisations as part of their governance structures. At the same time, difficulties of ***Sustaining Dunbar*** to position themselves in relation to the local authority may also reflect scarcity in the organisation's resources relative to the Council's, and that ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was not fully representative of the electoral ward in which it operated, which was evident in the tensions around the community wind turbine consultation. ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s targets for sustainability governance, as laid out in the LRAP, were ambitious, so the organisation was 'making waves'. However, it was hoped that in the near future mechanisms would be in place for community groups to gain input in the CPP's Communities theme group (Interview: Vicky), and as civil servant Donald's statement below shows, it was acknowledged that ***Sustaining Dunbar*** provided an advising role to the Council.

*"The Sustaining Dunbar resilience plan is I suppose at the cutting edge of where there's a particular view coming forward – this is the sort of thing that might provide solutions to things a long way before we get a wide buy into that, at the moment."* - Donald

In other words, ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s version of sustainability governance closely engaged with local politics, and therefore was exemplified in the organisation's negotiation of their relationship to the Council and the CPP.

Thirdly, some leaders within community projects – especially those with high sustainability literacy skills, whose primary role within their organisation was that of an entrepreneur of identity – envisioned a potential for community-based practices to play

a more crucial role in a future localised economy. As 'strong commons thinkers', these leaders would think in terms of 'commons systems' which would, for example, come up with ecologically resilient and socially sustainable models for using East Lothian's natural resources (Interviews: John, Alistair), or for community projects to upscale their activities to a point where they increase a community's self-reliance.

*“At this point in time, where the rich have taken as much of the money as they could possibly get, and they really are bleeding the last tiny wee ounces of money out of the system, I think this might be the perfect opportunity for community projects to realise what they have. Now whether they can find the initiative to stop looking for money coming fae our lords and masters and down tae them in wee dribs and drabs - as long as you tick this box here and tick that box there and actually realise, 'Hang on a minute! I could have more people growing food in Glasgow, we've got a lot of urban back courts, how much waste food goes to landfill every year, could we divert that landfill waste and create raised bed planters from it? Could we then sell these to housing authorities in Glasgow? Could we then offer them workshops about growing their own food to the residents? Could each back court, could we have a stronger sense of community spirit growing from this? We could have finance coming into us by creating these jobs. We could also take unemployed, unskilled young people, train them in joinery, woodwork, horticulture and develop them onwards and upwards.'” - Douglas*

Douglas' vision above outlines the potential for community organisations to begin to establish commons' thinking; while his professional focus within **Playbusters** was on environmental work with young people, his personal vision was not dissimilar from **Sustaining Dunbar's** LRAP applied to a particularly unequal, urban context. However, as he pointed out, as long as community organisations depended on the renewal of grant funding in order to function, they were unlikely to influence a large-scale economic paradigm shift. Douglas's statement also expresses a sentiment of distrust in political leaders and 'the rich' -perpetuating inequalities- and characterised community projects as a contrasting force. This suggests that Taylor Aiken's remark that the CCF constitutes

“tempering” and “state mollification” of potentially antagonistic activist groups' desires for change and action (2014:8) was at least to some extent mirrored amongst community activists who were now accountable to the government. The dynamics between the CCF enabling community organisations to intensify and broaden their efforts and at the same time not permitting income-generating activities<sup>28</sup> that would incentivise more radical efforts to boost local economic activities raises deeper questions around the conflicted nature of volunteering, the nature of work, unemployment, the value of labour, and whether volunteering constitutes a case of 'work', 'leisure' or both. Essentially, the question arises how to evaluate, or value, volunteering as a tool for social change.

“[M]ost historical change ... is the fact that people are not, for the most part, self-consciously trying to reproduce their own societies but simply pursuing value that makes it so easy for them to end up transforming those same societies as a result.”  
(Graeber 2001:88)

An economic system conducive to living within ecological limits would not reward only “competitive and materialistic outcomes even when these are socially detrimental” (Jackson 2009:155). Instead, evaluating productive activities in such an economy would attend to principles of flourishing, the provision of decent livelihoods, and low material and energy throughput (Jackson 2009:196). Clearly, voluntary labour in community projects satisfies two of those principles (low-impact activities that promote participants' flourishing), although its capacity to sustain livelihoods was limited to employed members of staff in the case studies. Because inequality, and its symptoms of unemployment or underemployment, is also a barrier to a sustainable society (Wilkinson & Pickett 2010), a lack of jobs poses a problem. In March 2014, Scotland's employment rate was 73.5% (Scottish Government 2014a), while in the 15% most deprived areas the employment rate was 57.8% (SIMD 2012). As volunteers in *Playbusters* stated, volunteering brings a personal, informal element to sustainability work and produces psychological and social value which cannot be underestimated. At

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28 In later rounds of the CCF, the prohibition of income-generating activities as part of CCF-funded projects was lifted and steps towards developing community-based social enterprises was encouraged (see Keep Scotland Beautiful, no date-b).

the same time, where unemployment, precarious work and issues arising from inequalities and deprivation are dominating more overarching and global concerns surrounding sustainability, volunteering alone is insufficient to building alternative, local economies. There was a sense that “a lot more help” (Interview: Jane) was needed to tackle inequalities and, by extension, a significant barrier to a more sustainable society.

*“I suppose if you had lots of local groups around the country, maybe joining together to make themselves one big force, that might help. I mean, you can obviously tackle local problems easily enough, but because so many of them I think are linked to broader factors, you would really need a lot more support, a lot more help to actually tackle these things.” - Jane*

In conclusion, in addition to CCF grant funding, more formal support was needed to tackle social and environmental issues locally, but this did not stop community organisations from doing their best to meet local needs or develop sustainability governance strategies in their areas. The community projects studied cannot be said to hold political power in conventional ways (demonstrated, for example, in the difficulties of the East Lothian's CPP to categorise ***Sustaining Dunbar***). Within the case studies, variations on the 'high-grid' versus 'high-group' spectrum determined the organisations' outlook on being either more outwardly directed, or more concerned with interpersonal dynamics. Community projects are collective institutions, for whom leadership -in terms of who participates in decision making and taking over responsibilities- and the number of participants with shared or similar interests are crucial variables in generating successful outcomes (Ostrom 1990: 188). The shared leadership which tended to spread in-group characteristics and championship, entrepreneurship and embedding of identities across a number of individuals emerged in response to differences in demographics, geographies and purposes of community organisations. In relation to Maathai's (2004) words, the case studies exemplify horizontal and distributed leadership styles which are well suited to diversifying sustainability governance and could be applied elsewhere. Finally, the roles volunteering played within the case studies highlighted social and psychological benefits of volunteering. At the same time,

interviewees' comments that volunteering for community organisations involved doing someone else's (the local authority's) job brought inequalities (alluding to different cultures of volunteering, which carries a stigma in some areas) and the need for job provision into focus.

Within their limits, community organisations engage in sustainability governance in relation to their participants (in 'high-group' organisations) and/or in relation to their area (in 'high-grid' organisations). However, the findings have raised a number of issues through which the capacity of community organisations to become more effective as sustainability governance agents could be increased - mainly in relation to creating jobs and increasing co-ownership of assets. In summary, this chapter has been about 'how' the case studies work, in organisational terms. The next chapter deals with 'what' the case study organisations do - the content of the projects undertaken, in terms of their practices and the values underpinning them.



## **CHAPTER SIX - 'Projectscapes': Patterns of Practices and Values for Traditions and Innovation in Sustainable Development**

### **6.0 Introduction**

*“The 'quiver' is an important image in skill development. Sometimes it's imagined that becoming skilled means finding the one right way to execute a task, that there is a one-to-one match between means and ends. A fuller path of development involves learning to address the same problem in different ways. The full quiver of techniques enables mastery of complex problems; only rarely does one single right way serve all purposes.” (Sennett 2012:201)*

The purpose of this chapter is to follow on from the discussion of sustainability governance in chapters 2 and 5.5 and to lay out in detail which practices make up the patterns of activities within the primary case studies. This chapter integrates analyses of patterns of activities and practices that emerged within the two main case studies with underlying values underpinning these patterns, held by leaders and participants of the community projects. In relation to values, the chapter will analyse emphases on traditions, renewal and intergenerational learning within the main case studies.

The research question that helped to generate the data for reflecting on practices and values within the case studies is: *RQ 2) In what ways do community projects facilitate learning about issues of sustainability and climate change among their participants?* Most of the data serving to answer this question is taken from semi-structured interviews, in which project staff members and other participants were invited to narrate their priorities with regard to sustainability issues, and were questioned about their



motivations for joining the organisations, and visions and hopes about the organisation's future.

Unique characteristics of each community project were reflected in the variety of practices employed to effect change, and in the array of values underlying these. Instead of analysing these techniques and values in isolation, I regard them as interdependent – values shape techniques, and techniques help to shape values. In contrast to values and techniques (see text box 4 for definitions), I derived the concept of 'projectscapes' from Ingold's (2000) concept of 'taskscape'. Projectscapes conceptualise teaching techniques and ways of learning, especially in informal learning environments where roles of 'teachers' and 'learners' were not always clear-cut.

**Value, n.**

“The relative worth, usefulness, or importance of a thing or (occas.) a person; the estimation in which a thing is held according to its real or supposed desirability or utility. [Also: the] principles or moral standards held by a person or social group; the generally accepted or personally held judgement of what is valuable and important in life.” (OED 2014d)

**Practice, n.**

“The actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as opposed to the theory or principles of it; performance, execution, achievement; working, operation; ... activity or action considered as being the realization of or in contrast to theory. [Also: an] action, a deed; an undertaking, a proceeding.” (OED 2014e)

**Taskscape, n.**

Taskscapes are patterns of dwelling activities: “Just as the landscape is an array of related features, so – by analogy – the taskscape is an array of related activities.” (Ingold 2000:195)

**Projectscape, n.**

I derived 'projectscape' from 'taskscape'. While projectscapes are arrays of related activities, these are restricted to a project, which constitutes an interwoven pattern of values and techniques, skills and tasks which are not necessarily related to dwelling activities.

*Text Box 4: Definitions of Value, Practice, 'Taskscape' and 'Projectscape'*

Bourdieu's (1990) concept of the habitus is related to 'taskscape', as it accounts for the formation of habit patterns around activities, and to some extent accounts for cultural difference through differently patterned practices or representations. The habitus

constitutes

“systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.” (Bourdieu 1990:53)

Habitus ultimately does not account for cultural and social change – or in other words, for how individuals engage with their space deliberately and beyond mere reproduction of the habitus (Marchand 2010:191). However, the habitus is useful in understanding why habits are unlikely to change if the physical-infrastructure, social and economic environment largely remains the same.

Within the case studies, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) happened informally, in accordance with Scott Cato's (2013) notion of place-based, immersive learning which is underrepresented in the formal education system, and therefore a strength of community projects. One aspect of such place-based, immersive learning is its relation to the body or embodied learning, drawing upon Heidegger's notion of dwelling, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the senses and Bourdieu's concept of the habitus (Marchand 2010:183). The latter is one way to conceptualise of habits being formed, repeated and structured.

Activities undertaken by projects make up the practices of delivering change for sustainability – whereby 'change' may refer to a) the personal development of project participants, or to b) changes to the locality or the wider environment. Most case study projects employed a mixture of 'soft' and 'hard' practices. Thereby 'soft' refers to activities which have aims that are not directly quantifiable, such as learning about sustainability issues or improving self-esteem, and 'hard' refers to activities which have aims that are directly measurable, such as the installation of energy efficiency “hard measures” (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:37). However, the distinction between 'soft' and 'hard' techniques is not clear-cut, as many activities, such as food growing, require a

mixture of the two, or enable more or less accurate measurements. 'Soft' and 'hard' practices are therefore best conceived as lying on a spectrum, and together making up projectscales.

While not explicitly mentioned by Ingold in connection with taskscales, values flow through the projectscales, nourish and shape them. Values are not equivalent to ethics, as moral judgements differ between cultures (Melé & Sánchez-Runde 2013), although values may reflect moral principles. In particular, I focus on extrinsic and intrinsic values, a distinction which is crucial for promoting pro-environmental values (Holmes 2011). Furthermore I focus on values around traditions, renewal, and inter-generational projectscales. This is to emphasise innovative and traditional elements in sustainability practices (see section 6.5), as well as presenting another manifestation of community projects' 'bridging' or liminal qualities, which are elaborated on in later chapters.

## **6.1 'Projectscales': Techniques for Learning and Teaching about Sustainability**

This chapter does not explore individual cognitive mechanisms of learning that have been touched on in chapter 2. Rather, collective learning is explored. Community projects for climate action and sustainability are place-based according to the CCF criteria, but the projects also form communities of practice around sustainability issues. All of the community projects studied had pedagogic elements related to ESD as a core purpose – in form of workshops, practical activities, or sharing of information. Collectively, these pedagogic elements are a form of 'upskilling'. Sennett's 'quiverful of skills' (2012:201) refers to a single craftsperson's mastery of techniques; however, it also could illustrate the array of skills acquired collectively, within a community group. One way to conceive of community projects' educational merits is by promoting and enabling 'sustainability literacy' (Stibbe & Luna 2009), or acquiring knowledge and skills in various fields related to sustainability.

“Literacy ... is a collection of skills that allow for effective participation and influence in diverse areas of social life. As people gain *sustainability literacy* skills, they become empowered to read self and society critically, to discover insights into the trajectory of society and to envisage where it is heading. They gain skills in rewriting self and society both in an effort to meet needs under increasingly difficult conditions and also to work towards new paths that lead to a more sustainable world.” (Stibbe & Luna 2009: 2)

In order to elaborate further of the 'collection of skills' that makes up sustainability literacy, Ingold's (2000) notion of 'taskscape' is a useful way to conceptualise patterns of practices through which learning happens. Ingold defines the notion of the taskscape as being qualitative, rather than being simply an accumulation of tasks or practices.

“As with the landscape, (the taskscape) is qualitative and heterogeneous: we can ask of a taskscape, as of a landscape, what it is like, but not how much of it there is. In short, the taskscape is to labour what the landscape is to land, and indeed what an ensemble of use-values is to value in general. ” (Ingold 2000: 195)

The analogy between taskscapes and ensembles of use-values, as distinct from values in general, does not work well for community projects in which pro-environmental values are promoted. Pro-environmental values may not be perceived to be linked to immediate use-value, because they are more long-term and future-oriented in nature. Ingold linked taskscapes to livelihoods and dwelling activities, while there is a more teleological element to community projects promoting sustainable practices. I thus call the kind of 'taskscapes' which emerge within community projects 'projectsapes', as they are not made up exclusively of dwelling activities (livelihoods may or may not depend on them). Projectsapes are made up of the kinds of practices which foster individual and collective wellbeing and benefits to localities and wider environment, as well as those which sustain the projects themselves. The practices which make up projectsapes convey different knowledges, propositional and non-propositional (Harris 2007), or 'knowing that' and 'knowing how' (Ryle in Harris 2007:3). Where propositional,

theoretical knowledge around sustainability and climate change was conveyed in projects to inform practical elements, this can be conceived as conveying values around sustainability, in the sense of emphasising the importance of pro-environmental practices, and – explicitly or implicitly – convey moral aspects of why sustainability matters. Accordingly, within community projects for sustainability, values shape projectscales, and values are also reproduced through the projectscales by participants in project activities.

In short, projectscales link livelihoods and more teleological aspects of sustainability, and require propositional and non-propositional knowledges. In the case studies, ESD or conveying sustainability literacy took on different forms. These forms were not necessarily fixed, as there was an element of experimentation - some staff members of community groups reported trying things and changing their practices if they felt this to be appropriate. In my analysis I focus on the two main case studies ***Playbusters*** and ***Sustaining Dunbar*** in depth, with references to other case studies where certain phenomena resurfaced or contrasted with the in-depth narratives.

#### Case Study 1: ***Playbusters***

***Playbusters*** began as a small organisation concerned with creating outdoor play areas and offering activities for children - at first through a project called 'Go Play', which was funded by the Scottish Government outwith the CCF-funding. Other ***Playbusters*** projects included 'Connecting Generations', which served to break down stereotypes and enabled the sharing of generation-specific skills between young and old, and fortnightly litter picking – mainly by the children who volunteered for ***Playbusters***. Indoor club activities were also offered to children. ***Playbusters***' projectscale was made up mainly of a range of activities offered to young people and adults in various community halls and other venues across Glasgow's East End, but especially in ***Playbusters***' office in Parkhead, where the organisation was situated. ***Playbusters***' projectscale was driven by values of equality and social justice, which were expressed by some of the key staff members in interviews. These values will be touched on in this section, but they will be discussed more in depth in section 6.2.



Illustration 9: Playbusters - Office Front with Images of Play Scenes

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
YOUTH ACTIVITIES	WHITEROSE 5-12 3.45 - 4.45 HUB SPORTS 5.13 4pm - 5.30	Y.M.C.A. 5-12 4.30 - 6.00	Quarryburn arts & crafts 9-12	CHURCH OF NAZARENE 4pm-5.30 5.5 WELL PARK 10+ 6.30-8.30	WELL PARK 8+ 6.30-8.30 CELTIC PARK 6.30-8.30	CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 8+ 5.30-7.30
OUTDOOR PLAY	4.00-5.30 DENBECK ST (5-12)	4.00-5.30 LEITHAMHILL PARK RODDIE (5-12)	3.30-4.10 BEATOCK ST (5-12) 4.45-5.45 WHITBY ST (5-12)	4.00-5.30 CRANHILL (5-12)		
GROW GREEN	12.30-16.30 CRAZY CRAFTS, W.PARK 15.00-19.00 ENERGY SHOP, W.P.R (20102, 15103, 19102)	13.30-15.30 ENERGY SHOP, W.P. TOWN CROSS ADVICE CENT 1.30-3.00 CROWN POINT COMMUNITY GARDEN (20102, 15103, 19102)			11-3 Simply Soup	
EASY SPANISH		4.00-8.00 ADULT SPANISH WELL PARK		4.50 PRIMARY SPANISH (5-12)		10-11.30 FREE-5 WELL PARK
CONNECTING GENERATIONS	12.30-1.00 CRAZY CRAFTS (20102, 15103, 19102) WELL PARK 12.30-5.30 AGR SCOTLAND	2-4.15 DEEP IN WELL PARK				
OTHER					Well park 9.30-12.30pm 'Simply for us'	
TAKE-OFF EVENTS			14103/4 Awards	14102 Comm. CHAMP AWARDS		

Illustration 10: Playbusters - Weekly Planner in the Office

Pro-environmental behaviour change was mentioned by some of *Playbusters'* staff members as a desirable outcome of the Grow Green with Glasgow's East End (GGWGEE) activities. However, structural barriers to behaviour change were referred to in terms of the poor quality of much of the local housing stock, as well as other symptoms of inequality – especially psychological symptoms such as low self-esteem.



Interviewees among *Playbusters'* team of staff members mentioned that the East End was a challenging area for environmental education, as environmental topics were not at the top of people's priorities (Interview: Siobhan).

When I first started my fieldwork with *Playbusters*, the project manager, the volunteer co-ordinator and a couple of other staff members who worked for GGWGEE, the CCF-funded leg of the organisation that was to be the focus of my research, organised a meeting to introduce me to the organisation. The staff members took pride in *Playbusters'* award-winning Spanish classes for community members. The organisation was once asked why they taught residents of Glasgow's East End Spanish “when they can't even speak English” - implying that the locally spoken dialect was considered to be inferior, or faulty English. The staff members pointed out that offering Spanish classes in the wealthier West End of Glasgow would never be questioned, and named this inequality as an example which reinforced their determination to offer the Spanish classes to people in the East End. Challenging the stigma associated with Glasgow's East End was a major driving factor for *Playbusters*, and influenced the programmes and activities the organisation offered.

The staff members felt that they needed to team up with other local organisations to successfully implement some projects in the local community. For example, *Playbusters* teamed up with the organisation 'Save the Children' for anti-poverty campaigning in order to address wider structural issues around multiple deprivation in the East End. During my induction, one staff member mentioned that a lot of the housing stock in the East End was in such a poor condition that its inhabitants could not do much to improve their energy performance, even if they wanted to. Following a few pop-up swap shops in public spaces such as churches, the organisation now ran a permanent swap shop. Because of the high levels of poverty in the area, the staff members were very concerned that it would not be seen as a hand-out or charity shop, alluding to a stigma associated with the use of these. Instead, they wanted the swap shop to be seen as a place to bring things and take something in exchange, perhaps encourage its users to sign up to a behaviour change pledge, as well as enabling social interactions.



*Illustration 11: Playbusters - Volunteers with their Crafted Items in 'Simply Swap'*

The principal project during the organisation's early stages, Go Play, aimed to offer spaces for creative play to help children learn and develop (Interview: Heather). Even though **Playbusters** now worked with adult volunteers as much as with children, Go Play appeared to be crucial in the formative phase of the organisation, during which it was given its name. Kinetic learning or 'knowing how', an emphasis on crafts and physical activities, continued to play an important role in the activities run by **Playbusters**. During the course of the fieldwork at **Playbusters**, when asked what appealed to them about working for the organisation, staff members answered, for example, that the work involved was “all round”, covering reducing, reusing and recycling as well as energy efficiency and food growing (Interview: Siobhan). The community gardens provided spaces for workshops covering a variety of skills beyond food growing, for example willow weaving.





Illustration 12: Playbusters - Willow Weaving Workshop in a Community Garden

Personal development remained at the heart of most activities, only that it was extended to include adult learners. Other aims and objectives were added in different phases of the organisation's development over time, influenced by funding decisions. Part of these later-stage aims were the realisation of sustainability objectives.

*“[The first involvement in community gardens wasn't] about climate change, it wasn't about anything like that, it was an activity to bring people together. You could see the enjoyment, you could see the health impacts, you could see people were happy, people were having fun and enjoying growing things and taking things away. However, when the Climate Challenge Fund became available, and I started to carry out research on it, it was very much a big learning curve for me. I didn't realise until that stage the impact of climate change. So the more I started to read up, the more research I carried out, I just thought 'we need to do something about this' and we need to do something in this community.” - Lynn*

In other words, **Playbusters** presented a case of an established community organisation that included some environmental activities, such as maintaining an allotment and

establishing local community gardens, but the organisation began to take environmental issues much more seriously through the CCF-funded GGWGEE. GGWGEE added behaviour change and sustainability benefits to **Playbusters'** agenda, offering a range of activities to engage volunteers and trigger behaviour change. As a result, there was some anecdotal evidence of behaviour change among **Playbusters** volunteers (Interviews: Sam, Siobhan). Some volunteers reported rethinking their everyday actions and behaviours too, however. Some staff members hoped that conveying knowledge about environmental topics brought about a change in the way people thought as well as behaviour change, and that the new behaviour was likely to stick (Interview: Siobhan).

*“A woman, who has never recycled in her life, and she’s in her sixties, she comes to one recycle event and turns round the next week and says, ‘Guess what I started doing, I started recycling!’ - That’s pretty amazing, in that she’s been at one event, and also because she’ll have a personal relationship with the likes of me and Sam who promote it. So she’s kind of doing it for us - a little bit - as well. That’s it, it takes a little bit of behaviour change and then that will be her new behaviour and something has changed for her. And as they say - ‘saving the world, one can at a time’, you know.” - Siobhan*

*“I always smoked and threw it in the street, and threw rubbish in the street. ... But when I cleaned the streets, I can’t do the same anymore, because I clean it. I say, ‘How can I do this for myself to clean up?’ So I don’t do it.” - Rahim*

**Playbusters'** points of contact were a mixture of public events, and fixed places such as the main office or the swap shop, which was open to members of the public. The emphasis was on face-to-face interactions, and on creating opportunities to engage “in easy, informal chat” to spread ideas. Beyond that, events and news were announced via email and social media sites such as facebook. These channels have the disadvantage that they rarely reached people who were not already involved with **Playbusters** in some capacity (Interview: Siobhan). **Playbusters** staff members called their efforts to inspire volunteers to engage with sustainability issues “planting” ideas (Interview: Sam) or “feeding” information (Interview: Siobhan). The emphasis was hereby on transmitting a

combination of theoretical and practical knowledges. In terms of the educational content delivered, **Playbusters'** Environment Group covered a variety of interrelated topics, such as food production and food miles, eating locally, eating seasonally, climate change, carbon footprints and eco footprints, renewable technology (Interview: Siobhan). Additionally, public events provided opportunities to learn about different issues, and about practical actions to address them.

*“[The climate change awareness part] will come out through things like interacting with the volunteers, feeding them bits of information, and ... that information is having an impact now. You can see that with a number of the swap shop volunteers, for example, who are starting to change their attitude and change their behaviour. And also we have an Environment Group every Monday afternoon, and we’ve changed the focus of that to make it a bit more structured and a bit more on the educational side - so we are taking different tracks.” - Siobhan*

The effectiveness of the volunteers' engagement with sustainability issues was reflected in their language; for example, volunteers began using words such as 're-use' and 'recycle' after engaging with **Playbusters** activities for several months (Interview: Siobhan). While 'behaviour change' was chosen as a target category in their CCF application and staff members emphasised where they had observed it among volunteers, this evidence remained anecdotal, as **Playbusters** did not measure behaviour change as part of GGWGEE. This suggests that the organisation maintained an implicit emphasis on learning processes, instead of monitoring the behaviours of volunteers. For example, 'Walk On The Wild Side' (WOTWS), a project with young volunteers, combined theory and practice in a way that could not be found in educational institutions such as schools. WOTWS culminated in a practical element which taught its young participants a range of practical skills, mainly for conservation purposes.

*“(The kids are) getting their hands on, sort of D.I.Y. They’re getting a saw in their hands, which is maybe not something too many kids do these days, and seeing*

*how you can construct something from nothing practically. And that has a major benefit in terms of wildlife and creating habitats for wildlife.” (Siobhan)*



*Illustration 13: Playbusters -'Walk On The Wild Side' Volunteers  
Creating a Wildlife Garden*

Douglas, the staff member who led WOTWS, was motivated by a desire to instil a sense of autonomy and personal competence into the young people he worked with. He thought that the development of hands-on skills and knowledge about plants and soils was important for this, and that these were part of the “skills to be an adult” which meant that the young people learned how to look after themselves (Interview: Douglas).

*“There was a wee guy that attended a couple of Saturday mornings, and he was your typical 'ned'<sup>29</sup> if you like, with the diamond earring, the short haircut, and it was all the best designer gear that illegally-got money could buy! And I put a spade into that guys' hand, and that guy was delighted to work hard. He got a benefit of physical exercise, and he moved an awful lot of compost, and he dug an awful lot of ground. It's no' gonnae make him an awful lot of money, but he learned something new. We've had another couple of wee guys who spent their*

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29 'Ned' is a Scottish word, usually derogatory, for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, who may be part of gangs. The English equivalent is 'chavs', which has been described as “insulting” and symptomatic as “hatred of the working class” (Jones 2011:2). Incidentally, I discovered Owen Jones' book 'Chavs' on a book shelf in Playbusters' office during fieldwork.

*lives, computer games, computer games, computer games. And they came out and just had the fun of playing outdoors, it was set up as fun in the first place, it wasn't really work as such. They were digging holes for trees to go in, they were learning how to roll the roots so the roots would spread out well into the soil and bind in easier, and they're staking it, and putting a deer tube onto it, and learning why they're doing that, and learning that you've got to care for these things - to nurture them. And that was a side to their nature that they'd never seen before; it was all about destruction, shooting things, competing. It's a slower way of life and it's maybe not quite as consumptive a way of life as the aspirational society."*  
- Douglas

Apart from reflecting the organisation's ethos, a hands-on, process-oriented approach perhaps also reflected feelings of staff members that particular sensitivity was needed in promoting environmental behaviours in areas affected by multiple deprivation. Lynn, who oversaw the overall direction of the organisation, remarked that it was very difficult to engage people who were living in areas of "severe deprivation" in the reduction of carbon emissions, because many people lived "hand to mouth". However, she felt that some progress had been made to deliver the CCF project in inclusive ways. Some of the larger barriers to achieving energy efficiency, however, were outwith her organisation's control.

*"I think that the way this project has been managed and delivered with the input from local people, volunteers and everything else has actually went a long way towards behavioural and attitude change with people. ... I think what people are seeing is that in small ways, small actions can make a difference in the longer term. The bigger challenge for us, I can see it already happening in some ways, is working with housing organisations who have more control over the homes, and what can be done in the homes in terms of energy savings."* - Lynn

Some of the sensitivity around addressing issues of deprivation or poverty stemmed from the fact that people were largely thought to not self-identify as poor. The complexity of multiple deprivation meant that "poverty" was generally conceived of as



something which implied starvation or homelessness (Interview: Jane). Staff members and volunteers elaborated on the slipperiness of inequality and relative poverty, which meant that while people were not desperately poor, they were relatively poor and had fewer opportunities than relatively wealthy people (Interviews: Jane, Heather).

**Playbusters'** swap shop 'Simply Swap', which was part of the CCF-funded leg of **Playbusters** and in which the majority of my fieldwork took place, exemplified **Playbusters'** projectscape in particular ways. The main purpose of the shop was to encourage local residents to swap clothes, thereby encouraging a culture of exchange, and discouraging overconsumption. The swap shop offered a variety of methods for participation and engagement. Firstly, during the decoration phase of the shop, much of Simply Swap's decoration was constructed from recycled materials, such as clothes racks from old pallets. Reusing and designing materials appeared to result in volunteers thinking more about their waste, and some volunteers picked up discarded things from the street to reuse them (Interview: Sam). Using recycled materials for the decoration meant that sustainability aspects were embedded in the very fabric of the shop. The decoration process also offered opportunities for volunteers to learn practical skills. However, in practice the decoration phase relied mostly on one volunteer, who was a skilled professional decorator, while simpler tasks were undertaken by the other volunteers. Accordingly, there was a trade-off between making the most of one person's expertise and finishing the project more quickly, and passing on certain skills to other volunteers that might benefit from learning them. This tension between outcomes and processes reappeared in **East Kilbride Development Trust**, as described in text box 5.

In **East Kilbride Development Trust**, there was a trade-off between making the most of the specialised expertise possessed by some participants, and making slower progress in order to make the most of the opportunity to pass on knowledge and skills. On the one hand, the presence of two engineers and a person with a degree in botany proved to be very useful to the advancement of the project in the short term. On the other hand, this meant that the project could progress at a relatively fast pace, given the constraints in time and active participation, sometimes at the expense of in-depth skill sharing. For example, the 'botany expert' was driving forward the organisation's seed saving programme. However, a change in life circumstances meant that said volunteer was suddenly not able to be present as much as he previously had been. Consequently, the remaining volunteers were unsure how to organise the harvest and store the seeds, because the knowledge and skills had not yet been passed on to them. In that season, part of the seed harvest was spoiled.

*Text Box 5: Cross Cut: East Kilbride Development Trust*

Once the decoration phase was finished, the swap shop was open to the public once a week, run by a group of ***Playbusters*** volunteers and a member of staff. Secondly, the swap shop had become a regular presence as a venue in the area of Tollcross. During the regular opening hours, participation in the swap shop allowed volunteers to work as a team. Local residents could make use of the shop to swap clothes, and have social small-talk with the volunteers. Thirdly, the swap shop was a hub for environmental education. A number of educational posters conveyed information about environmental issues, mainly relating to waste management, to volunteers and customers alike. Additionally, sometimes 'crazy crafts' sessions took place during the shop opening hours, during which volunteers would make a variety of crafts and seasonal decorative items from recycled materials. The example of 'Simply Swap' shows that one project offered diverse avenues for engagement and degrees of participation. Overall, the volunteers who were running the shop were the shop's focus. The rule that four volunteers at a time had to be present during opening hours, as well as the intensive engagement experienced during sessions such as 'crazy crafts', perhaps came at the expense of attempting to attract more customers into the shop – such as through longer opening hours and spending more time on making the shop known. The philosophy of 'intensity over quantity' reflects ***Playbusters***' wider taskscape well; the priority appeared to be the intensive engagement of small groups of volunteers, while also making a difference in the wider area.

In summary, ***Playbusters***' projectscape was construed around promoting opportunities, diverse skills, behaviour change and personal development in Glasgow's East End, an area affected by multiple deprivation. In the following paragraphs, ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s projectscape is unpacked, which played out in a relatively affluent area.

#### Case Study 2: ***Sustaining Dunbar***

***Sustaining Dunbar***'s organisational structure was explained in the previous chapter, but aspects of the structure are repeated here with respect to the organisation's projectscape, which exemplified sustainability governance at a community level. While the

organisation had grown out of grassroots efforts, it liaised closely with the local authority, the Community Partnership (CPP) and local community organisations. The founding of the organisation was triggered not only by a community benefit grant of a local windfarm operator (which in the end funded a separate but closely related organisation: 'Be Green'), but by a change in local government after the East Lothian-wide election in 2007, when the Scottish National Party and the Liberal Democrats took over from the Labour Party (Interview: John). Throughout the time of fieldwork, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** worked closely with East Lothian Council and the CPP. John knew one of the new councillors and introduced him to the Transition model. At the time of research, some individuals within East Lothian Council collaborated with ***Sustaining Dunbar*** to deliver workshops to partners of the CPP, aiming to promote the notion of a 'Transition County' status for East Lothian.

When ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was set up, leading up to its formal launch in 2008, it was to function as an umbrella organisation, supported by a variety of pre-existing environmental initiatives and practical projects (Interview: John). A registered Transition initiative, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** employed practices which included the advancement of education and the promotion of learning opportunities. These educational aims feature first and foremost in ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s constitution (see text box 6), and are listed before the regeneration of the environment and public space. Furthermore, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** provided services, in the form of practical advice and energy audits in collaboration with the Community Windpower-funded community advice organisation 'Be Green', as a form of engagement. Among those people who engage with ***Sustaining Dunbar***, degrees of participation may shift - one previous service user had become involved with the organisation and now worked for it in a sessional capacity (Interview: Angus).



“The company has been formed to benefit the community of DUNBAR which comprises all those living or working within the East Lothian Council ward of Dunbar and East Linton (“the Community”) with the following objects:

- (1) To advance education and in particular to promote opportunities for learning for the benefit of the general public
- (2) To advance environmental protection and improvement in the Community through the provision, maintenance and/or improvement of public open space and other public amenities and other environmental and regeneration projects (but subject to appropriate safeguards to ensure that the public benefits so arising clearly outweigh any private benefit thereby conferred on private landowners
- (3) To relieve those in need by the promotion of trade and industry within the Community for the benefit of the general public
- (4) To encourage, stimulate and support volunteering principally in the Community
- (5) To advance citizenship and/or community development (including the promotion of civic responsibility and the promotion of the voluntary sector). But such that the company shall do so following principles of sustainable development. ”

(Sustaining Dunbar 2006)

*Text Box 6: Sustaining Dunbar's Aims and Objectives*

**Sustaining Dunbar's** staff members and volunteers held a wide range of expertise (Interview: John); together, they developed a vision for the local area. They found it hard to attract local residents to those visioning meetings; despite the distribution of leaflets to every household in the Ward, the organisation only managed to engage a “select group” in these issues (Interview: John). In other areas of engagement, **Sustaining Dunbar** also found it challenging to engage people, and the organisation therefore changed its approach to emphasising outreach.

Svenja: “*So is that would you say the biggest barrier that has been placed on the engagement side, or...*”

John: “*No, it's no barrier at all actually, because we've just gone out to where people are and tried and have engaged with them.*”

“*I've always found it difficult to get people to engage in (our) sort of service unless they are referred by a professional - in any sort of energy advice.*” - Angus

While attempting to engage local residents and at the same time finding it difficult to do so, the organisation bridged the role of a professional service provider and a community organisation with open boundaries, in which anyone could participate.

The Local Resilience Action Plan (LRAP) 'Dunbar 2025' had been developed through the CCF-funded project **Sustaining Dunbar** ran prior to my fieldwork. The LRAP, which addressed environmental issues strategically for Dunbar and the surrounding region and was made available online, formed the basis of **Sustaining Dunbar's** CCF-funded 'Connecting Dunbar' project. During the consultation phase for the LRAP, the organisation found that local residents tended to be aware of climate change and 'peak oil' as global problems, but there was little awareness about the local implications (Interview: Grace). The LRAP took a long-term strategic approach at problem-solving on a time scale spanning fifteen years. The LRAP had been developed by **Sustaining Dunbar** staff members, sometimes in collaboration with the local authority of East Lothian, in order to increase **Sustaining Dunbar's** leverage with regard to changes in the infrastructure and the policies (Interview: John). In terms of individual households, “huge barriers” were identified with regards to energy efficiency and renewable energy generation (Interview: John). The organisation hoped to overcome these barriers by advising on, or sometimes giving, financial support to aid local residents in making changes. By enabling home owners to make structural changes to their dwellings, “in some cases .. they can actually reduce their carbon emissions as by generations (to come).” (Interview: John). John's comment reflects the strategic long-term organisational outlook of **Sustaining Dunbar**.



Illustration 14: Sustaining Dunbar - Local Resilience Action Plan Cover

The organisation was also concerned with improving the quality of life locally, and keen to consult with local residents on their priorities. Grace shared her position as an administrator of **Sustaining Dunbar** with John, whose professional background was more explicitly “environmental”, since he had worked for environmental organisations before. Grace emphasised that she regarded climate change primarily as a social rather than environmental issue, and intended to approach her role as a facilitator and educator within **Sustaining Dunbar** accordingly, in order to reach out beyond people already interested in the environment. She found that when she started her job, perhaps her grasp of climate change was not as thorough as **Sustaining Dunbar's** Board of Directors would have liked it to be - but on the other hand, her background and training in participatory techniques that involved listening to local people was a positive addition to the organisation. Grace thought that events “only attract pretty much the usual suspects”, and hence **Sustaining Dunbar** needed to reach out to engage with people

“wherever they are, making their own events, their own classrooms, their own schools, their own homes, their own churches” (Interview: Grace). In order to reach out beyond a minority of the population, she tried to avoid framing meetings around 'peak oil' and climate change or “so-called sustainability”.

*“Had I gone down the road of preaching issues surrounding climate change, we wouldn’t have gotten very far. And that the issues were really about people, where they were at just now, what their aspirations were in the future, and through the process of bringing in the subjects of what future challenges are going to be from their point of view, and from the climate scientists’ and peak oil scientists’ point of view, come to some understanding of a practical way forward.” - Grace*

The objectives of projects run by **Sustaining Dunbar** should widen involvement and engagement beyond “the usual sort of person who normally gets involved in these sorts of projects”, as well as exemplifying good organisation, monitoring and evaluation (Interview: Grace). A focus on participatory processes meant that the priorities of participants were not necessarily aligned with **Sustaining Dunbar’s** sustainability objectives. For example, in collaboration with another organisation promoting sustainable transport alternatives, 'Sustrans', **Sustaining Dunbar** organised a participatory street planning event in Dunbar's public library, an excerpt of which is seen in the picture below.



*Illustration 15: Sustaining Dunbar - Participatory Street Planning Event*

At the street planning event, residents of a local street in Dunbar were consulted on their views on improvements to their street, which were to be financed by East Lothian Council. The event trialled a bottom-up approach to town planning. Some of the participants' responses, especially requests for more car parking, were not necessarily reflecting sustainability pathways – a workshop organiser commented that “people find it hard to get their heads around communal areas and their benefits” [Field notes, ***Sustaining Dunbar***, 11.2.2012]. The participatory nature of the event emphasised local democratic, bottom-up and process-oriented aspects of SD, not necessarily culminating in implementing sustainability measures such as slowing down traffic and increasing cycling provisions, but presenting these as possible options to the workshop participants. There are potential tensions between participatory processes and outcomes where the goal is to implement sustainable solutions. This tension has been recognised elsewhere – “while civic participation is seen as essential to the creation of a sustainable society, people in late-modern societies may be more individualised and therefore less inclined to participate” (Middlemiss 2014:930). While Middlemiss (2014) states that in an individualised society people would be less likely to participate, people did participate in the street planning workshop, but some of their priorities were individualistic (wanting more car parking spaces) rather than wanting the street to be a communal, sustainable space.

As previously mentioned, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was informed by and supported initiatives that have been running for 15 – 20 years, adopting a networking approach (Interview: John). ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s interconnectedness with other locally engaged groups, whether as an initiator or as a collaborator, reflected that the organisation was part of what appeared to be a network of local community activists who were variously active in political or non-political organisations.

*“Anything that I’ve been involved in over the past twenty years, you’ll always see the same people at different events. Whether that’s a school ... thing, or Dunbar in Bloom, or – it’s generally always the same people that you run into that are basically community activists. So yeah, there’s crossover between all the different groups. ... So if you’re a community activist, then by default almost you’re*



*politically active.” - Catriona*

The organisation's practices for engaging local residents in sustainability involved, for example, energy audits and collaboration with 'Be Green', and running events simultaneously with other community food projects, such as an event celebrating the harvest season, promoting seasonal produce. Sustaining Dunbar's Harvest event encouraged families to feed themselves with local produce, defined as food grown or produced within a fifty-mile-radius, for two weeks [Field notes, ***Sustaining Dunbar***, 18.8.2011]. The harvest event culminated in a public event where participants were asked to share a dish made from local produce which, despite the difficulty to source some ingredients such as butter or sugar, gained praise from participants [Field notes, ***Sustaining Dunbar***, 15.9.2011]. ***Sustaining Dunbar*** also organised occasional film screenings in a local church hall – for example, the screening which concurred with the organisation's Annual General Meeting, as seen in the picture below.



*Illustration 16: Sustaining Dunbar - Public Film Screening*

In addition to public events, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** hosted monthly 'Green Drinks', which were informal meet-ups in a pub in Dunbar, during which discussions about topics related to sustainability were encouraged.

Another series of events were 'Neighbours Together' meetings, to which at the time of research 80 households had signed up [Field notes, *Sustaining Dunbar*, 3.11.2011]. The 'Neighbours Together' meetings involved people from particular neighbourhoods meeting in someone's home to discuss strategies towards low-carbon practices in their households, which were collectively framed as encouraging households to pledge to become 'household canny'.

“A baseline ('Household Canny Challenge') questionnaire was developed to assess household's current carbon footprint, to assess households' interests, concerns and support needs and to enable them to make pledges of actions they planned to take. Households pledged to reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through a range of activities related to household energy, food, transport and consumption. Each household was supplied with an action plan and with targeted information and support from our energy, food waste and transport staff.” (Sustaining Dunbar 2012)

Hence, low-carbon practices were framed through the notion of becoming 'canny', which means knowing, prudent or cautious (OED 2014e), and furthermore facilitated as a collective, rather than individual, activity. 'Neighbours Together' combined elements of communities of place (by getting together neighbours from a particular street or part of town) with communities of practice, by encouraging these newly formed groups of neighbours to become 'household canny' as part of a collective. An emphasis on collectivity also emerged in the establishment of a group which was to create a community garden near a local hospital. The group consisted of a mixture of participants who had engaged with Sustaining Dunbar before, and participants who were new to the organisation [Field notes, *Sustaining Dunbar*, 27.10.2011]. Like *Playbusters*, *Sustaining Dunbar* employed a variety of practices to engage people, and while some people engaged in several of these practices, others picked only particular practices to engage with.

*Sustaining Dunbar's* approach to behaviour change tended to be pragmatic; no-one explicitly emphasised that a particular participant had changed their behaviour as a

result of engaging with ***Sustaining Dunbar***. Rather, the organisational practice emphasised the provision of advice on making physical changes – for example, in terms of better home insulation – in order to enable other, more behaviour-based changes. In the words of one staff member, “cost is going to change behaviour” (Interview: Angus). ***Sustaining Dunbar*** would like to support local job creation in the future, for example by training people to install renewables or insulate houses, as part of the wider Transition agenda in East Lothian (Interview: Angus). Providing training for skills needed in a future where fossil fuels are scarce was seen as a crucial aspect of sustainability work (Interview: Cath), which suggests that the organisation was not only focused on short-term results, but longer-termed processes involving upskilling were deemed important.

Other practices of ***Sustaining Dunbar*** involved sustaining itself as an organisation, which involved refining its relationship to the local community. While the lack of bureaucratic strings ensuring representation was seen as an advantage, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** as a community organisation had to constantly assert and reassert its own legitimacy as an actor of sustainability governance representing the views of the wider community. The main efforts to gain legitimacy consisted of resource-intensive community consultations. One of the community consultations was around a local wind turbine ***Sustaining Dunbar*** planned to erect. The organisation could not use the CCF funding to generate an income; however, the organisation planned ahead by founding 'Dunbar Community Energy Company', the Board of Directors of which overlapped with ***Sustaining Dunbar***, to potentially generate income through community-owned wind energy in the future. Angus worked with a local farmer to come to an agreement with regards to erecting a community wind turbine on his land. The farmer had previously been approached by a commercial developer wishing to establish a wind farm, but opted to work with individuals from ***Sustaining Dunbar*** instead who were not seeking large profits, “because it’s the community and he likes it” (Interview: Angus). However, it proved to be more challenging for ***Sustaining Dunbar*** members to enthuse the local residents about the wider benefits of a community wind turbine.

*“(In the consultation) they were finding people were not that bothered about*



*generating an income for the community. This term 'community benefit' is something that needs to be defined so that people actually get it. Nobody really gets it unless you give good examples of it” - Angus*

Angus hoped that through the erection of a community wind turbine, the organisation **Sustaining Dunbar** would not only become more self-reliant financially, but would also become more accountable to the community and respond to the community's wishes, instead of mainly being accountable to the Scottish Government: “we can actually not be dependent on you know, CCF money and rules and the time it takes to report back; it's reportable to the community” (Interview: Angus). Furthermore, Angus hoped that localised energy generation may serve as a vehicle to influencing behaviours around energy consumption.

*“If you're involved in the production then you'll be more aware of your consumption. And if you're more aware of your consumption, then you'll be more careful about peak demand. And if you can avoid peak demand on the ground, then really you start to solve problems of your generating capacity on the ground.” - Angus*

In 2010, only 19.1% of Scotland's electricity was derived from renewable sources (Scottish Government 2012a). Hence one major barrier to realising community-owned renewable energy was Scotland's wider energy infrastructure (Interview: Cath). However, infrastructural challenges were not limited to the electricity supply. Production processes in general made it difficult to offer services at a community level for organisations like **Sustaining Dunbar**. Beyond community-owned energy generation, another example of **Sustaining Dunbar's** efforts to localise production was the establishment of 'Dunbar Community Bakery'. Through their efforts to source produce locally, 'Dunbar Community Bakery' presented an avenue for local agribusinesses to distribute their produce in the region. The hope was that localising production could stimulate a wider demand for localised services.

*“If it comes to the food thing, there's a supply and demand. And it's trying to get*

*that critical mass where you get to a tipping point and people go, 'I want to shop local, I want to do this.' And I suppose the whole thing with Sustaining Dunbar is getting people to realise, 'We want to shop local, we want to transport wise, we want to do that - yes, we want a low and local energy.' And that's the big challenge, it's getting from where we are now to where we want to go."* - Alastair, East Lothian Council

In terms of ***Sustaining Dunbar's*** practices towards increasing the localisation of production and services, there was uncertainty what should come first - localised supply or demand for localised services. Alastair explained that unless there was sufficient demand for, for example, locally grown food, then it might be hard to persuade the farmers to enter contracts with independent local distributors, instead of being tied into contracts with big supermarket chains who might ask agribusinesses to keep reducing their prices (Interview: Alastair).

To sum up the projectscape of ***Sustaining Dunbar***, the organisation's practices involved the promotion of resilience through the LRAP, and offering diverse avenues for engagement through public events such as the local food challenge, while 'Neighbours Together' and the formation of a community garden offered focused pathways towards low-carbon living and food production with social benefits, respectively. Furthermore, the organisation formed and fostered local alliances as well as forging links with local politics, despite not being affiliated to a particular party. Overall, as a 'high-grid' community organisation, ***Sustaining Dunbar's*** projectscape was construed around sustainability governance, offering advice, facilitating projects to engage local residents (rather than volunteers), future-oriented strategic planning, and networking with several local community organisations and the local authority. Governance, explored in chapters 4 and 5, is a crucial topic in SD (Jordan 2008); ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was exemplary in local sustainability governance practice and collaborating with several institutions and organisations in the process.

In conclusion, this section has introduced the notion of 'projectsapes', combining techniques, skills and values, the phenomenology of which was explored in chapter 2.

Projectscapes of the two main case studies, *Playbusters* and *Sustaining Dunbar* were explored, with particular reference to the practices employed by the projects. The following section explores the values which shaped and are shaped by these practices.

## 6.2 The Communication and Expression of Values

The importance of values in sustainability campaigning - and, by extension, in sustainability education - has been increasingly recognised in recent years. For example, values are seen as important in climate change risk perception (Leiserowitz 2006). Research findings primarily from within social and environmental psychology suggest that, despite environmental concerns being relatively widespread, relatively few people take actions to change towards a more environmentally friendly lifestyle, which has been referred to as the 'value-action gap' (Blake 1999). Blake elaborates further that this "attitude-behaviour relationship is moderated by two primary sets of variables: the structure of personal attitudes themselves; and external or situational constraints" (1999:264). In this section, I deal with the former variable, or how personal and organisational attitudes or values were manifest within the case studies.

Whether or not values are conducive to motivating pro-environmental behaviours depends on the kinds of values promoted or manifest in environmental initiatives. Supported by Oxfam, WWF and Action for Children, the Public Interest Research Centre has published *The Common Cause Handbook* which distinguish intrinsic and extrinsic values, arguing that the former tend to promote pro-environmental values, whereas the latter undermine them (Holmes 2011). Explaining their *Values and Frames* model, Kasser and Crompton argue that "the growing evidence showing that appeals to values such as image, status, and money often serve to reinforce the importance that people attach to these self-enhancing, extrinsic values and to undermine their concern about social and environmental problems" (2011). In the literature on community development, Maslow's hierarchy of needs has been influential on conceptualising

values. Maslow proposed a classification of human needs, involving physiological needs, safety and security, belongingness, esteem and self-actualisation (Lester 1990:1187). Maslow's model is useful in understanding the influence of inequality on values, in the sense that 'lower-level needs' (necessary for survival) have to be fulfilled before moving on to 'higher-level needs' (Alessio 2013:52). However, Rahman's (1995) critique of Maslow's "egocentric needs" in the context of a different, Islamic approach serves as a reminder that values – and models of values – are culturally specific. Bearing that in mind, I proceed to use Schwartz's model to investigate values within the case studies.

The concept of values is slippery. While values can relate to ethics, not all values may be considered to be ethical. Instead, values indicate what a person deems to have worth. Both the *Common Cause Handbook* and the 'Values and Frames' model acknowledge that they lean heavily on Shalom Schwartz's work, which I also use in my analysis (see table 10). Schwartz et al. (2000) define values as "cognitive representations of people's important goals or motivations, phrased in socially acceptable language useful for coordinating action" (315). They categorise values into two spectra: on the one hand, Schwartz et al. (2000) categorise values as being located on the spectrum between 'self-enhancement' and 'self-transcendence'. On the other hand, values sit on a spectrum between the categories 'openness to change' and 'conservatism'.

*Table 10: A Categorisation of Values*

<b>Value</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
POWER	Self-enhancement	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources (authority, social power, wealth, preserving my public image)
ACHIEVEMENT	Self-enhancement	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards (ambitious, successful, capable, influential)
HEDONISM	Self-enhancement	Pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself (pleasure, enjoying life, self-indulgent)
STIMULATION	Openness to change	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life (daring, a varied life, an exciting life)
SELF-DIRECTION	Openness to change	Independent thought and action—choosing, creating, exploring (creativity, freedom, independent, choosing own goals, curious)
UNIVERSALISM	Self-transcendence	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature (equality, social justice, wisdom, broad-minded, protecting the environment, unity with nature, a world of beauty)
BENEVOLENCE	Self-transcendence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact (helpful, honest, forgiving, loyal, responsible)
TRADITION	Conservatism	Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide (devout, respect for tradition, humble, moderate)
CONFORMITY	Conservatism	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms (self-discipline, politeness, honoring parents and elders, obedience)
SECURITY	Conservatism	Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self (family security, national security, social order, clean, reciprocation of favors)

*(Source: Schwarz et al. 2000)*

Values may be conceptualised as clusters of emotions or cognitive processes; however, for the purpose of looking at levels of environmental concerns among social groups, they are here conceptualised as moral principles, as well as use-values deemed important. Schwartz (2000) suggests that values held by individuals correspond to the topics they are concerned about, they might be willing to support politically, and upon

which concerns they might be willing to act. In this sense, understanding values is essential to understanding people's beliefs regarding themes surrounding (un-)sustainability, their acceptance of scientific facts, and the public and political will arising from these understandings. Schwartz et al. (2000) suggest that worries about oneself or one's immediate surrounding ("micro-worries") tend to be linked to self-enhancement values, while worries about the wider world ("macro-worries") tend to be linked to self-transcendent values. Not all values correspond to their assigned category in equal measure – for example, the self-transcendent value "universalism" has been associated more strongly with macro-worries than the self-transcendent value "benevolence", which is more concerned with the welfare of the worrier's immediate acquaintances. Schwartz et al. (2000) formulated "environment worries [which] correlated significantly ... with universalism values [and] they also correlated significantly negatively with power, achievement, stimulation, and hedonism values" (335). This suggests that people base their evaluation, prioritising and risk perception of issues such as climate change in their daily lives on complex, underlying interplays of various factors such as values, emotions and experiences that are holistic, affective and intuitive (Leiserowitz 2006). Dietz et al.'s (2002) values that correlate with environmental concern are based on Schwartz et al.'s (2000) clusters of values, but Dietz et al. (2002) use 'altruism' instead of 'self-transcendence', 'self-interest' instead of 'self-enhancement', and 'traditionalism' instead of 'conservatism', whereas the term 'openness to change' remains unchanged. Values of altruism and openness to change have been positively associated with environmental concern and pro-environmental behaviour, whereas values of self-interest and traditionalism have been negatively associated with environmental concern and pro-environmental behaviour (Dietz et al. 2002). In section 6.3, I examine values of traditionalism and of openness to change, which emerged particularly strongly in the case studies. In section 6.4, I discuss approaches to sustainability and change within the case studies in relation to these values.

It is notable that participants in CCF projects were found to be motivated rarely by pro-environmental values, and more commonly by personal benefit such as "saving money, enjoying themselves, or improving their well-being" (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:44).

Children tended to be more commonly motivated by environmental concerns than adult project participants (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:68). Yet projects have strengthened what Brook Lyndhurst refers to as a “diffuse sense of community spirit”, but also the formation of new friendships (2011:42). Especially the report's finding of an increased sense of community, or the strengthening of community capacities, suggests a shift from individual to collective emphases. Values are important within community projects, because they explicitly or implicitly drive the organisation's projectscape. Values and 'needs' are also important in driving the motivations of individuals to participate in community projects. Therefore, for the purpose of this analysis, I distinguish between values communicated by a community organisation during and as part of their activities and underpinning their aims and objectives, and motivating values and needs expressed by participants who engaged with the organisation.

#### Case study 1: **Playbusters**

As I will unpack in this section, **Playbusters'** organisational values emphasised self-transcendence, openness to change and traditionalism. The values communicated by an organisation starts with its identity as revealed through its name. **Playbusters'** name stems from a time when the focus of the community group was on developing play spaces for children in the East End. Several staff members stated that the name was currently outdated, because the organisation latterly catered as much to adults as to children and young people.

However, the name appeared to be suggestive of what the organisation offered to adults and children alike. To 'play' suggests stimulation, novelty and excitement, manifested in the variety of activities on offer, and new skills to be developed in an informal manner. During my fieldwork, I saw a playfulness manifested in the various activities that aimed to be both educational and entertaining, such as “crazy crafts” sessions with recycled materials, field trips, games, and family-friendly events. While this diverse playful approach underlying the projectscape promoted self-enhancing values of hedonism, openness to change was equally promoted by offering stimulation and self-direction. Accordingly, **Playbusters'** communication style around environmental issues focused on

being engaging, in both practical and playful ways.

*“We do (the environmental education) in sort of silly ways and watch bits and clips and discuss things and stuff like that. So it’s not a teacher/classroom sort of situation at all; it’s interactive and that’s the whole thing.” - Siobhan*

The focus on the East End defined the place-related boundaries of GGWGEE. Conceiving of the East End as an entity communicated certain values in itself – a broadening of the minds beyond perceived territorial boundaries. By and large, territorial boundaries between different areas in the East End shape the East End's culture (Interview: Douglas). However, people from one area in the East End would attend **Playbusters** activities that took place in another part of the East End (Interview: Siobhan). **Playbusters** offered services and volunteering opportunities to different communities of place across the East End, thereby “knitting them together” (Interview: Siobhan) - effectively building a community of practice around environmental practices.

Some **Playbusters** staff members and volunteers explained in interviews that it was important for the organisation to challenge the psychological stigma associated with living in the East End (Interviews: Heather, Helen, Maria), considered to be an area with high levels of deprivation. **Playbusters** aimed to value local assets and to focus on the East End's strengths rather than the weaknesses (Interview: Heather), instead of weighing into the “bad news” and the negative connotations usually made when the East End was mentioned in various media outlets (Interview: Derek). While a minority of people in the East End were thought to be trouble-makers, many people and organisations, including **Playbusters**, were engaged in a lot of good work in the East End - but there was a tendency for good news to be mentioned less prominently in the media (Interview: Derek). Furthermore, negative connotations, stigmas or judgements have a negative impact on the sense of identity of many people resident in the East End.

Some volunteers mentioned in interviews that **Playbusters** also promoted activities which carried stigmas locally, such as litter picking, where volunteers would “get funny looks” (Interview: Helen) and the acquisition of second-hand clothing (Interview: Jane).



When asked why people might not like wearing second-hand clothes, Jane responded that clothes in particular may be less popular than other second-hand items.

*“I suppose, because people think you’re wearing them, so it affects you a lot more directly than maybe a second-hand book or a film. If the book is maybe a bit ripped, you can still read it, or if the film is a bit scratched, it might still work. But if it’s clothes, they think they’re putting it on. I know some people are germphobes, so they think, ‘oh, it’s been touching somebody else, I can’t put it on’. I know people like that.” - Jane*

It was not clear from Jane’s statements whether the stigma around second-hand clothes was entirely reducible to concerns about hygiene and the perceived intimacy of wearing clothes that previously belonged to someone else. A desire to wear only new clothes could also be related to a person’s outer image and extrinsic values around self-enhancement, given that “expenditure on clothes and holidays affect the subjective economic well-being of all households” (Cracolici et al. 2014:353). In some respects, **Playbusters** challenged prevailing values around self-image which brought with them a negative image of engaging in particular activities, or engaging in volunteering in general.

*“You see (local young people) kind of looking over and wanting to become involved, and I think it was more of a confidence thing and what their peers might say to them, ‘You’re away helping them, they’re daein’ that fae nothin’. These kind of values are frowned upon in the East End of Glasgow. Unless you’re getting paid for it, what’s the point in daein’ it? Well, you are getting paid: you’re creating a better environment for yourself, you’re geein’ yourself somewhere nicer to live. And it’s about trying to explain that change in values to them.” - Douglas*

The organisation’s approach to promoting universal values linked to sustainability and climate change suggests that the staff members perceived there to be a gap between sustainability values and the priorities of many local residents. Sam thought that many ‘Simply Swap’ volunteers, for example, didn’t come to **Playbusters** because they were

interested in the environment, but because they were interested in volunteering and because the swap shop appeals to them. Now **Playbusters** volunteers were gradually learning about environmental issues as well, perhaps primarily motivated by saving money through tackling fuel poverty (Interview: Sam).

GGWGEE staff members addressed values of universalism and benevolence subtly embedded in the project's activities, rather than engaging in assertive messaging. Sam emphasised the importance of having a foothold and being visible to the community. He reckoned that this was one of the achievements of the swap shop 'Simply Swap', which effectively allowed passers-by in the local community of Tollcross to drop in to the shop on their terms. In this way, **Playbusters** could reach a wider audience to engage with the project on a superficial level, beyond the organisation's established volunteer base.

*“I think things like the Simply Swap [are] giving us a kind of foothold in the Tollcross area, where you can then actually start to kind of get people a little bit more interested in what they’re doing and finding out about things just kind of gradually, without having to force it down their throat by coming in and sayin, 'Right – come and do this energy saving workshop' or something like 'Come in – grow your own food!' – necessarily not everyone is interested in that, or, 'Come and pick some recycling stuff!' They can just come and see if there is any clothes they want and we can gradually spread the word and give out the information whilst they’re there.” - Sam*

**Playbusters**'s promotion of universalist and benevolent values was most prominently expressed through learning-by-doing. Through 'upskilling' volunteers, staff members aimed to ensure the longer-term sustainability of projects such as the two community gardens started by **Playbusters** beyond the CCF-funded period.

*“The whole principle behind community work is that you support people to become empowered, and for them to gain the skills. So it's not about doing things for people, it's about helping them with the experience to do things themselves.” - Lynn*

Lynn's statement expresses effectively the desire to pass on non-propositional knowledges, promoting values of self-transcendence through lifelong learning. Upskilling group participants by doing things together also has the effect of moving away from a 'banking' model of education (Freire 1970) in which learners are passive, towards learning as an actively engaged and shared process.

**Playbusters'** staff members and volunteers were motivated to participate in the organisation by an array of values. Firstly, staff members were by definition paid to work for the organisation, which implies that they were motivated to participate in part by a need for relative material security. Staff members employed to run the environmental projects also tended to express universalist values about the planet, and staff members who were more concerned with the running of the organisation in general, or the more socially oriented projects, tended to express more values of benevolence and concern for their fellow residents. This was not surprising, given **Playbusters'** organisational evolution over time. For example, Douglas of 'Walk On The Wild Side' (WOTWS) expressed a longing for a different economic system, which relied less on money and more on promoting skills of self-sufficiency. He aimed to transmit this to the children and young people he worked with, and also promote an emotional and intellectual understanding of humanity's place in earth's ecosystems.

*“One of the things we try to do is to manage nature into working for us. We've done it very poorly and been very arrogant about it. We've not looked at what nature does and let's face it, she's been successful for 4.5 billion years since the inception of the planet itself and we've been here for a small fraction of that time, and the arrogance that human beings have towards their environment staggers me, to be perfectly honest. Kids are brought up, and the environment is no' something that's talked about. They're no' part of their environment any more, it's something they get out of to, it's no' part of their life, they feel as if they're separate from it, and it's a paradigm I've tried to change with them.” - Douglas*

Among the volunteers, some wanted to meet local people, and be part of and contribute

to the local community (Interviews: Sinead, Rahim), get involved with something alongside their family members (Interviews: Dave, Helen, Susan) or gain local community recognition (Interview: Dave). All these motivations suggests a desire for belonging and social relations, corresponding to the ('conservative') value of security according to Schwartz's model. Other volunteers found enjoyment the most important part of their engagement with ***Playbusters*** (Interview: Calum), which suggests that hedonistic values were one motivating factor. Some volunteers wanted to “give something back” (Interview: Alex), liked to observe the difference engagement with the projects made to others (Interview: Calum) or were concerned about the environment (Interviews: Dave, Alex, Mary). These concerns for other people or the planet suggests that at least some volunteers were motivated to engage with ***Playbusters*** by benevolent or universal values.

In addition to ***Playbusters***' emphasis of values of self-enhancement which were underlying the organisation's philosophy of lifelong learning and personal development, the promotion of values surrounding traditions and renewal summarised ***Playbusters***' unique approach to community work, particularly in relation to the organisation's environmental projects. Therefore, the role of values around tradition and renewal will be discussed more in depth in section 6.3.

### Case Study 2: ***Sustaining Dunbar***

***Sustaining Dunbar***'s organisational values were a mixture of self-transcendent values that were universalist in their explicit emphasis on the “bigger picture”, and more traditional values around security in the face of inevitable change. The organisational values are explored in this section, as well as the values motivating staff members. Not all staff members were motivated by environmental values, however, but as a 'high-grid' organisation, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** tended to be focused on outer impact in the wider community, so staff member's motivations tended to include benevolent values.

When ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was formed, the first meeting of people who were interested

in the local area and sustainability issues was run in a participatory manner in order to explore people's concerns and preferences (Interview: Grace). The intention was to become an inclusive, participatory organisation, which is accountable to the community.

*“I suppose we're trying to be an ... inclusive, enabling, supportive organisation, trying to build a resilient community to prepare people for the challenges which we're gonna face as a community, and gradually make people more aware of the challenges and the changes which are inevitable.” - John*

Some of the first participants during the founding stage of **Sustaining Dunbar** were part of a campaign against a local incinerator; however, the organisation did not perceive itself to be a campaigning organisation at the time of research, in order not to polarise people around particular issues (Interview: Cath). Instead, **Sustaining Dunbar's** aims and objectives were portrayed as common sense, logical and relatively value-neutral in the light of climate change and peak oil (Interview: Cath).

The heterogeneity in the values and priorities among the local demography meant that for **Sustaining Dunbar**, there appeared to be some tension between the desire to be accountable to and guided by the preferences of the community, and promoting scientifically informed objectives around a strategic sustainability agenda. Board member Cath mentioned that she wanted to be respectful and inclusive of local residents who worked for industries that might be at odds with sustainability objectives, such as cement industries or Torness nuclear power station.

*“These are human beings as well and have a right to respect for the work. ... People deserve respect for where they are in their own journeys and you make a big mistake if you actually try to criticise people for not being further along or not being as far along as you are or I am. You just alienate people as well doing that.” - Cath*

**Sustaining Dunbar's** organisational values were not homogeneous, however. There was a spectrum of values with which leaders approached the organisation's governance

strategy. Some, like Cath, advocated an explicitly environmental governance strategy and being supportive of relatively top-down environmental legislation, while others, like Grace, favoured participatory principles of community planning. Some staff members were particularly careful to ensure that a 'green' or environmentalist identity was not attributed to them. For example, one staff member referred to herself as a facilitator and private consultant who strived for neutrality, and “always stayed clear of being involved with what I perceived to be environmental green type organisations” (Interview: Grace).

*“This isn’t about the environment first, it’s about people first, it’s about people’s livelihoods, it’s about people’s wellbeing first. And once that gets sorted, then everything else will fall into place.” - Grace*

*“I don’t want people to see me as some kind of hippy, and Sustaining Dunbar has to be very careful because a lot of people do see it as that, and (two of the car club members) very much see it as a hippy organisation of do-gooders I think, and I think we have to be quite careful not to alienate people.” - Fiona*

There was a perceived gap between the pro-environmental values driving a lot of **Sustaining Dunbar's** practice, and the values of some of the target groups the organisation aimed to engage. It emerged in several interviews with staff members that some groups of local residents **Sustaining Dunbar** aimed to engage were interested in environmental issues, while other local residents were not interested in environmental issues (Interviews: Melissa, Bob). There was the feeling that some local residents could only be persuaded to participate in practices which have pro-environmental or sustainable consequences if it saved them money – an extrinsic value.

*“(The older folk) know a lot about the buses and the public transport, and it’s not because of sustainability. It’s because, you know, it’s cheap. So you have to balance those, and sometimes emphasising the money saving aspect of it is a way to get into talking about sustainability - and I think that’s quite useful.” - Melissa*

*“I think there’s always gonna be a range of people - some are gonna be*

*interested, some are just much more hedonistic, more interested in where they're gonna go out. ... They don't feel any responsibility as a citizen of the planet, but perhaps – if you can engage people in the same way, you can offer them something nice but definitely else. They know there's the money – it saves them some money.” - Bob*

Melissa's statement that some demographic groups who use public transport were not doing so “because of sustainability” implies that she thought the kind of motivation behind certain behaviours was a decisive factor in assessing the behaviour as sustainable or unsustainable. She saw the promotion of values of self-enhancement (saving money) as a means of promoting values of self-transcendence (sustainability). However, in some instances, saving money could be an indicator of frugality, or of conservative values that can support sustainability by not feeding extrinsic, consumerist values. Bob did not see saving money as an incentive for shifting local residents' values, and instead emphasised that what ***Sustaining Dunbar*** had to offer could be beneficial to those not interested in environmental issues in various ways. Bob's approach to meet local residents he wished to engage on their own terms was thus more similar to Grace's participatory outlook.

Emphasising the positive side effects of belonging to a community was part of ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s engagement strategy, which was to be balanced with educational activities about the need for the community to become more resilient. This balance was aimed at, for example, when choosing documentary films to screen during public events for the local community, which should not “overplay the sort of doom and gloom scenario”, and instead emphasise that there is “an opportunity for creating a better place to live” (Interview: John). Hedonistic values were seen as an important part of promoting a high quality of life in Dunbar and the surrounding areas.

*“There is a value on being part of a community, you know, being able to go for a walk on the beach within five minutes of leaving your house and you can't put a value on these things but people do actually value their local environment.” - Cath*

*“I see [Sustaining Dunbar] as mainly being an organisation to help people out*

*and to help them to you know, travel by bus, by bike, by walking, to know how to make compost, to grow more food, and to do things that are nice to do - and not to necessarily help the environment, but also help the people who get so much more out of it if they are walking and cycling. Then they'll meet their neighbours more, and it will be more of a friendly place.” - Melissa*

In addition to values communicated by **Sustaining Dunbar** as part of their activities, and which had perhaps shaped the organisation institutionally, a range of motivating values were held by key members of the organisation. Personal motivations of **Sustaining Dunbar** participants, most of whom were paid to work for the organisation, reflected an appreciation of local, flexible working hours, as well as embracing the organisation's ethos. For some, being involved in **Sustaining Dunbar** was an expression of their deep care for nature. For example, some explicitly mentioned the connection between spending time in nature, and taking action to care for or protect the environment (Interviews: John, Angus). While some staff members were single mothers who valued working locally (Interviews: Fiona, Grace), others wanted to reduce the amount of time they worked, which they were not able to do while working for a conventional company (Interview: Angus). Behind the desire to reduce the working hours and increasing flexibility was the desire to be more self-sufficient through, for example, growing food, baking bread, spending time in nature and participating in community matters, which would be harder to realise during a full-time job (Interview: Angus).

*“I didn’t want to go from one box to another box, which is the train, to another box, which is an office, back to the train box, back to the house box. I don’t like it; I want to be outside a wee bit. ... You can forget what you are trying to look after if you don’t see it very often.” - Angus*

Fiona declared that she was not motivated to work for the organisation for environmental reasons, but because she wanted to challenge the prevailing car culture in favour of more pedestrian and cycle-friendly streets for herself and her children (Interview: Fiona). Fiona's statement implies that she saw personal motivations to be



more revealing than actions in determining how 'green', or environmentally minded, a given person's identity was. Motivating values around the flexibility, accessibility and limited hours of working life can all be traced to a desire for self-direction, which Schwartz et al. (2000) classified among the cluster of values around 'openness to change'. A motivation for more cycle-friendly streets can be derived from a mixture of benevolent values, and a desire for self-direction for Fiona and her family.

Among partners of ***Sustaining Dunbar***, motivations for collaborating with the organisation varied. For example, a local farmer agreed that ***Sustaining Dunbar*** could lease part of his land to install a community wind turbine. According to Angus, the farmer's primary motivation was financial and strategic (self-enhancing), but the farmer also valued the potential community benefit (Interview: Angus) in a benevolent manner. Among those people within East Lothian Council and the Community Planning Partnership who were keen to roll out the 'Transition' agenda at county level aligned with ***Sustaining Dunbar's*** aims, it was unclear whether any motivating values were their own or their political allies' values. However, as East Lothian Council's leader, Alistair took the risk of introducing a novel, long-term vision ('Transition'), which suggests that he might have been motivated by self-transcendent values beyond his own career as a politician.

***Sustaining Dunbar's*** organisational values, as well as motivating values held by the organisation's staff members, reflected the organisation's attempts to balance information about the difficult topic of environmental crises with a positive vision of better ways of living. As such, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** walked a line between stimulating traditional values around security among the local residents they attempted to reach out to, and openness to change in form of stimulation and self-direction. The creative tension between tradition and renewal will be discussed more in depth in the following section.

## 6.3 Traditions and Renewal: Building Bridges Across Generations

The case studies promoted traditional values on the one hand, and renewal or openness to change on the other hand. The element of renewal in community projects was apparent, for example, in *Sustaining Dunbar*'s resilience action plan looking fifteen years into the future. However, an outlook of 'renewal' was also apparent in practices such as promoting fresh approaches to gardening (community gardens), and in bringing children and adults together, for example, in *Playbusters*' 'Connecting Generations' programme, which I elaborate on in this section. The juxtaposition or combinations of elements of tradition and renewal shows aspects of SD and of communities which seek their reference points in the past and in the future, in order to transform the present.

### Case Study 1: *Playbusters*

*Playbusters*' projectscape embedded values around tradition and renewal in their activities, through the demographic groups the organisation was working with – the age range of volunteers included the whole spectrum from children to pensioners. These values were also expressed individually by volunteers and staff members, such as the desire to tap into the heritage of allotments, or through emphasis on contemporariness in the 'crazy crafts' sessions or the community gardens. The organisation also offered programmes which a mix of children and adults – especially older adults through the 'Connecting Generations' programme.

In the first instance, values of 'renewal' can be interpreted as values concerned with innovation, the future and the next generation. Building on *Playbusters*' origins as an organisation aimed at providing play spaces for children, the organisation offered a wide variety of programmes aimed at young people. According to staff member Heather, *Playbusters* aimed to provide a space for learning for children who were not thriving in school and for those who did, and emphasised emotional learning which institutions such as schools did not provide. *Playbusters* regularly undertook school visits and offered after-school clubs and field trips, in which the children were well supervised

(Interview: Derek). The activities with **Playbusters** became a significant part of the life of some of the young people.

*“Some of the young people have been coming since they were five to different projects and they’re maybe nine or ten now - and they’re still here, which is good. They always want to know what’s happening and what their next activity is, kind of thing. So they keep involved in the projects and always want to know what’s happening within Playbusters.” - Calum*

According to **Playbusters'** leader Lynn, issues around children's rights, developing play areas and tackling environmental issues were all interrelated, which was reflected in the choice of programmes run by **Playbusters**.

*“Some of the research I carried out in terms of Climate Challenge substantiated that - every child's future matters, very clearly linked in the children's right to play with issues of climate change, and that children have a right to play in their own natural environment.” - Lynn*

Not all of **Playbusters'** programmes were promoting free play, however. Some environmental programmes were more structured and focused, with elements of outdoor education and scientific education.

Another **Playbusters** programme, 'Connecting Generations', brought together older adult mentors and young people in joint activities. Derek, a **Playbusters** volunteer in his early seventies and a key member of Connecting Generations, told me that he was involved in the 'Pensioners Action Group East' when they were approached by **Playbusters** regarding a possible collaboration. He did not think that he would be interested in working with young people, but he started talking to the young people and enjoyed it so much that he decided to get involved in the programme.

*“The idea I think was to break down the barriers between the different ages. It has been very successful I may add; I now have some terrific little friends now*

*that go to school. ... As I always say, I've got pals fae five to eighty-five now.*" - Derek

The emphasis of 'Connecting Generations' was to skill-share between generations; for example, young people who were competent in the use of digital technologies could share their knowledge with older people. On the other hand, Derek explained, the programme also aimed to get children “away from computers”. Derek ran gardening sessions with children on the *Playbusters* allotment, and praised “older, traditional allotments”. While he hesitated to compare allotments directly to community gardens, which he was less familiar with, he thought that especially allotments tended to foster do-it-yourself attitudes. Allotment holders usually had to source the materials they need themselves, and build up bonds and networks with other allotment holders through an economy of exchange, and through communal facilities and social events on the allotment plots (Interview: Derek). Derek regarded community gardens as more contemporary phenomena, “like carbon footprints”, and potentially more short-lived than traditional allotments.

Derek and the 'Connecting Generations' crew had been involved in a heritage programme for the Glasgow Allotments Forum. The 'Connecting Generations' allotment team was picked as one of the exemplary allotments, and subsequently the team gave presentations about the allotment at various venues. Derek thought that educational institutions' role in conveying physical and practical skills (such as swimming, football and “home making”) had declined, and that exposure to allotment heritage could teach children other aspects about the past.

*“And now we’re thinking of doing other heritage stuff outwith allotments, maybe – there’s a lot of steelworks, a lot of different things happened in the older days around the Parkhead area and Shettleston. There was heavy industry - there was all types of other types of work that was very interesting to delve into. There was hospitals, aw god, there was so much in here that does nae exist now. So that’s a kind of – the wish for an allotment heritage programme has become a stepping stone into other programmes, and so everybody’s a winner, because it keeps the*

*kids involved in different things and they learn different - they want to know about what happened way back in the fifties and the sixties.” - Derek*

Derek's statements were not the only incidence of a pride in heritage within the case studies. In ***East Kilbride Development Trust***, a pride in the local town's heritage also emerged, as well as a general preference for allotments, as described in text box 7. The Trust's core volunteers were also, like Derek, of retirement age.

In ***East Kilbride Development Trust***, the CCF-funded community garden was built entirely by volunteers. Participants expressed a belief that many volunteer organisations were not truly working with volunteers, but pay staff members to do the majority of the work. Implicit in these statements is a sense of pride and ownership over the site at every stage of the construction process. Incidentally, before ***East Kilbride Development Trust*** obtained CCF-funding, one of their stated aims was to campaign for the increased provision of allotment sites by the council. Some of ***East Kilbride Development Trust***'s other projects were similarly concerned with the heritage of the new town, dating back to when it was still a village.

*Text Box 7: Cross Cut: East Kilbride Development Trust*

In ***Playbusters***' community gardens, volunteers of different ages connected informally. Harry, a middle aged volunteer in one of the community gardens – a partnership between ***Playbusters***, a local school, Glasgow City Council, and several other local organisations – reflected that his prejudice against children had been challenged by working with children.

*“I was actually impressed down in that garden down there, we were actually at yesterday, the kids. I thought, ‘Oh no, bloody kids, no’. But one of these kids was brilliant, better than most men I’ve worked with, you know, this twelve year old. ... He would just have shovelled away for hours. ... He was inspiring me, you know.” - Harry*

Mike, who worked for the local authority and was a partner in the community garden, thought that the East End needed community gardens more urgently than more affluent areas in the city. In his experience, gardens established at or in partnership with schools needed more support, because unlike in the more affluent areas, parents did not usually

come and volunteer. However, outwith activities with the schools, **Playbusters** provided a space for family members to volunteer alongside each other, and thus spend time together. For example, Susan and Helen were mother and daughter, were both involved in the swap shop, and sometimes brought Susan's granddaughter along to activities.

Another programme, 'Walk On The Wild Side'<sup>30</sup> (WOTWS), began as a summer school for local and school children, and continued to run for the duration of one year, incorporating field trips and biodiversity education and culminating in the construction of a wildlife garden on a gap site. The wildlife garden had an ecological as well as a social function, transforming a litter-strewn, former gap site into a bio-diverse place enjoyed by local residents - thus 'renewing' the place. WOTWS volunteer Calum thought that the project overall made a big difference to parents and children alike – for example, beyond the transformation of derelict land, they learned how to handle tools - passing on traditional skills to the next generation. The project combined the learning of skills (traditions) with the transformation of derelict land into ecological design features (renewal) to improve the area. Douglas, who designed and ran WOTWS, reflected on the role community projects could play in working with young people. He explained that community projects had more leverage to host a range of activities, while schools faced certain barriers. In theory, the Curriculum for Excellence, the Scottish curricular reform which was conceived in 2004 (McNaughton 2007), should allow such an integration. In practice, barriers to such an integration included head teachers who were resistant to the idea, and junior teachers who were resistant to the additional workload which the risk assessment required (interview: Douglas). However, while community groups tended to be more flexible with respect to the kinds of activities they were able to offer, if they wished to work with schools, they would have to find the resources to tie these activities into the curriculum outcomes (Interview: Douglas).

WOTWS's efforts were not embraced by all members of the local community. The wildlife garden was affected by vandalism when their willow dome was destroyed, but it was quickly rebuilt.

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30 'Walk On The Wild Side' was funded by Scottish National Heritage, not the CCF, but it has been included here as a project which worked with issues of sustainability within **Playbusters**.



*Illustration 17: Playbusters - Vandalised Willow Dome*

In order to prevent or limit vandalism, staff members strive to communicate with as many local residents as possible, emphasising that the structures were built by young people (Interview: Calum). However, the widespread acceptance of ecological design partly depends on cultural values and norms around garden design in the neighbourhood (Nassauer et al. 2009). Accordingly, a communal wildlife garden – a novel feature in the area – may not be immediately attractive to all local residents.

Symptoms of multiple deprivation in the neighbourhood might have been a barrier to engaging local residents. Calum, who was a local resident as well as a sessional worker for *Playbusters*, explained to me that locally divorce rates were high, and that significant numbers of children did not go to school in the area surrounding WOTWS's gap site garden. Calum named the widespread neglect of young people, the lack of role models for young people, and illiteracy among adults as some of the most significant problems the neighbourhood was facing.

*“A lot of people in the East End, probably more than fifty per cent don’t stay with both parents. ... It’s quite unusual when you hear of a family where it’s still the ma and da and two kids, or one kid or whatever. It’s usually a ma and her boyfriend, or a da and a girlfriend, you know. They’ve all split up - ... that’s dead common in the East End, in fact probably common everywhere. Maybe they’ve not got a role*



*model or whatever in the house. And I know some young people who use the services and all - that might be going home and their ma or da is full of drugs or drink, and they don't talk to an adult until maybe they come back to the club again. There's nobody to talk to. They go in, maybe after being at the club or whatever, and go to their room, or go and make themselves their dinner. Some of them have got a hard life.” - Calum*

In line with Calum's statements, Rahim, a 'Simply Swap' volunteer, thought that lack of activity in adults was a symptom of deprivation, and emphasised the need to get adults to be more active, so they could transmit this to their children. He thought that an organisation like **Playbusters** could play an important role in promoting active lifestyles to adults, but that ultimately, the government needed to create more jobs to combat widespread unemployment and associated deprivation. Calum's and Rahim's statements emphasise intergenerational and economic barriers to community development, whereby community organisations have to work around symptoms of deprivation and inequalities when implementing their projects.

Values around traditions and renewal were not only apparent in the mixing of different age groups, but also in the types of activities offered. **Playbusters'** swap shop in Tollcross featured a contemporary 'shabby chic' interior design, created by volunteers from reclaimed materials. However, Rahim pointed out that the act of swapping had both old and new connotations.

*“[Swapping is] a very old system, but before they make the money, it was very normal and agreeable. For example, I have something nice, and you have something nice. So we can swap it, because you like mine and I like yours, for example. ... It is changed now, but it's an old system, bartering in Glasgow, and now it's a new system - it has come back again.” - Rahim*

Rahim's observation about the traditional and new elements of swapping things sums up the parallel and intertwined elements of tradition and renewal that emerged in **Playbusters** and other community projects. Intergenerational activities, increasing



awareness of local heritage, and introducing innovative projects to the East End make up *Playbusters'* local identity as a force of transforming the present.

### Case Study 2: *Sustaining Dunbar*

In *Sustaining Dunbar's* projectscape, values around renewal perhaps featured more strongly than traditional values. However, this needs to be seen in the context of the local town's demographics. The town of Dunbar is a popular holiday destination, and takes pride in its heritage as the birth place of pioneering conservationist John Muir, as well as for its golf courses and walking routes (Dunbar Trades' Association 2014). As a community organisation concerned with sustainability, *Sustaining Dunbar* perhaps emphasised most strongly those values concerned with the 'renewal' aspects of sustainability, rather than values around traditions or heritage which were already emphasised by long-standing local institutions such as the flower festival 'Dunbar in Bloom' or environmental charities concerned with the local history such as the John Muir Trust, which hosted a museum about the life of John Muir. However, some interviewees felt that an emphasis on building community was in itself promoting traditional values (Interview: Catriona).

Apart from creating contemporary projects such as community gardens, the most significant novel idea furthered by *Sustaining Dunbar* was perhaps the organisation's identity as a 'Transition' group. As has been discussed in chapter 2, 'Transition' is a relatively novel approach, whose ideas were first fleshed out in the Transition Handbook (Hopkins 2008). The creation of Sustaining Dunbar appeared to be pivotal in introducing 'Transition' ideas to local councillors and the CPP, ultimately fostering the emergence of the aim to become a 'Transition County'. For example, Alastair thought that the ultimate aim for East Lothian to become a 'Transition County' would involve the liaison of local community organisations with the CPP, in order to upskill young people in sustainability-related jobs, such as renewable energy.

*“We're really keen to try and upskill many local people - particularly there's all the youngsters we have. I just noticed the headlines in the paper this morning*

*saying about youth unemployment is at record high. Can we try and upskill people from university or from school or wherever, to then come up and be the people who then go out and do the fitting (of renewable energy devices)? ... We can help with that through the schools, through working with the colleges - trying to train people up as well. But we're looking at how we work with them to do that.” - Alistair*

While the 'Transition County' ideas were in the early planning stages at the time of research, there was an inter-generational aspect to **Sustaining Dunbar's** current work. While **Sustaining Dunbar's** work around environmental governance was mainly engaging adult residents, the organisation also worked with Dunbar's primary school, and organised family-friendly events such as events to celebrate bicycles and cycling. Involving local schools was common to all community projects researched for the case studies. Schools tended to be the hubs in communities where parents first get in contact with people after moving to a place (Interviews: Catriona, Melissa). In Dunbar, all children went to the same primary school, and some **Sustaining Dunbar** participants got involved in environmental activities at the school in their capacity as parents (Interview: John). Melissa, who worked on **Sustaining Dunbar's** transport project, found that it could be hard to engage parents and pupils at schools when running information stalls at school fairs, and that it took time to build up a reputation.

*“I think the kids help [to get people interested in sustainability]; the kids are a big way in as well. If you chat with them, you know, they are a lot more interested in it and then they go and chat to their parents or grannies or granddads, and that's a good way to get them to sort of start a discussion.” - Melissa*

**Sustaining Dunbar's** activities with the school included the promotion of cycling and walking, thus also influencing the behaviour of those parents who dropped their children off at their school. **Sustaining Dunbar** has worked mainly with the primary schools, but was starting to work with the local grammar school where, in addition to the promotion of cycling, the organisation promoted the use of public transport, so the teenagers can be more independent (Interview: Melissa). As part of promoting cycling, **Sustaining Dunbar** delivered cycling training at the primary school (Interview: Bob).

Beyond transport-related activities, the organisation promoted composting with worms through the project 'Worms Work'. The organisation had an educational display illustrating the benefits of vermicomposting by showing the various stages of the composting. This display was shown in schools and at public events.



*Illustration 18: Sustaining Dunbar - Vermicompost Display at a Dunbar Science Fair*

Generally, *Sustaining Dunbar* contributed to the environmental education repertoire of the local schools in the same way *Playbusters* did – as an independent organisation, contributing particular educational activities. However, *Sustaining Dunbar's* gravitas were perhaps its long-term aspirations in the wider community, also in relation to young people's local employment prospects. Aspirations to establish training and employment opportunities for green jobs in East Lothian appeared to be at an early exploration stage at the time of research. In addition to exploring how to work with universities and colleges, social enterprises may become a part of East Lothian's strategy for 'green jobs' (Interview: Cath). However, the intention to combine sustainability with the creation of jobs suggests a long-term vision which bridges the generations.

The theme of 'traditions and renewal' manifested itself not only in relation to the

organisation's work with children or young people, but also as a demographic issue. Some interviewees suggested a demographical split in Dunbar, whereas 'old' residents were perceived to be people who were born in Dunbar, and 'new' residents were perceived to be people who were not born in Dunbar, even if they had been living there for decades (Interviews: Ben, Duncan). All of the people I interviewed in connection with ***Sustaining Dunbar*** were 'new' residents, which suggests that there was a tendency for the organisation to be associated with 'New Dunbar'. ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s staff members endeavoured to break down any perceived demographic boundaries and to establish trust.

*“That’s the trouble with the older generation. ... They’re a bit, not scared but a bit wary of official people and the council, and we’ve got to try and get over the idea that we are not official, you know, ‘You can come and chat with us, and our job is to try and put forward the views of people to the council.’ ... It’s always ‘them and us’, it seems to be, especially with the older generation. We need to try and get something in the middle, some sort of conduit to exchange views. It’s quite hard but I think we’ll get there in the end.” - Melissa*

***Sustaining Dunbar***'s approach to networking, and the fact that the organisation collaborated with older, more established environmental organisations such as the John Muir Trust (Friends of John Muir's Birthplace 2014), might contribute to fostering dialogue between local heritage and new approaches, such as 'Transition'. In that sense, while ***Sustaining Dunbar*** itself appeared to exemplify an openness to change over traditional values, it established and maintained links with more 'traditional' local organisations in a spirit of mutual respect. The following section analyses these projectscapes of traditions and renewal.

## 6.4 Discussion: Projectscaapes of Innovation and Tradition Bearing

The main purpose of this chapter was to convey how practices, skills and values form patterns within community projects which constitute projectscaapes, derived from Ingold's (2000) taskscaapes. I chose to identify the patterns of techniques within each project as based on taskscaapes in order to convey a qualitative feel, rather than list each technique and its observed consequences as if they were separate entities. More specifically, the projectscaapes of the case studies *Playbusters* and *Sustaining Dunbar* suggest innovation (promoting values and practices associated with renewal) and tradition or conservative practices (promoting values and practices associated with times gone by) characterise approaches to sustainability and change within these community projects.

There was a tendency for *Playbusters'* projectscape to be performative and non-propositional in nature – through outdoor activities with young people such as cycling and creating a wildlife garden, through the crafts sessions with recycled materials, and through the food growing activities in the allotment and community gardens. Learning can be conceived as a task if it is part of a structured activity – for example, WOTWS also conveyed propositional knowledge about biodiversity to its young participants, and *Playbusters'* Environment Group conveyed propositional knowledge about topics such as climate change or energy efficiency. Such propositional knowledge also forms part of *Playbusters'* projectscape.

*Sustaining Dunbar's* projectscape, in contrast, was primarily concerned with sustainability governance and the transmission of more propositional knowledges through the organisation's LRAP, which addressed resilience in East Lothian in a systemic manner. However, the organisation did also enable local residents to actively reduce and decarbonise their energy consumption, promoted cycling, and tacitly supported a variety of local organisations which promoted hands-on, non-propositional knowledge through activities such as woodlands management or localising production cycles through a community bakery.

Dimensions of time ('new' and 'old') allude to the way in which taskscapes possess “intrinsic temporality” derived from “its rhythmic interrelations or patterns of resonance” (Ingold 2000:154).

*“Temporality and historicity are not opposed but rather merge in the experience of those who, in their activities, carry forward the process social life. Taken together, these activities make up what I shall call the ‘taskscape’.”* (Ingold 2000:194).

Ingold proposes that “tasks are the constitutive acts of dwelling” (Ingold 2000:195), and hence taskscapes essentially represent patterns of dwelling and the construction of livelihoods. This is where projects differ, as they at once represent acts of dwelling that go beyond the immediate sustenance of livelihoods, and are not generally perceived as such in the day-to-day lives of project participants. While concerned with 'big picture' sustenance of social and environmental realms, community projects do not currently generate the resources to sustain themselves or their participants, which will be explored further in chapter 7. There is a gap between the relative unimportant role sustainability practices play superficially especially in urban livelihoods or dwelling activities, and the important role the accumulation of such practices could have - if adopted widely and with immediate effect – in the long-term preservation of the global ecosphere. This gap is bridged by the intentionality of community projects, the value-driven teleological taskscapes which carry the buds of possibility, potentialities for change towards social practices within ecological limits. In a wider sense, all project activities promoting sustainability issues are linked to livelihoods and dwelling, given that sustainability is inherently future-oriented. It is concerned with space in the sense of *Lebensraum* (living space), in the sense that the environment “comprises not the surroundings of the organism but a zone of entanglement” (Ingold 2009). However, in concrete terms, among volunteers there was a differentiation between the kinds of tasks offered by community projects, and the need to secure livelihoods through paid work. Especially in ***Sustaining Dunbar***, staff members whose salaries were paid through CCF-funding mentioned the need to build a more secure local economy where 'green jobs' offer

opportunities to secure livelihoods while engaging in sustainability-oriented work such as renewable energy or the installation of energy efficiency measures. Therefore, in the short term, the sustainability-related practices which made up the projectscapes did not constitute in themselves dwelling activities in Ingold's sense; they were not sufficiently wide-ranging to sustain their participants.

The educational nature of community projects means that projectscapes were not always restricted to the activities happening as part of the projects, but also touched the domestic spheres of those participating. In *Playbusters*, there was limited anecdotal evidence of behaviour change occurring, such as through increased recycling. In contrast with Siobhan's assertion that the behaviour change she observed in a volunteer was likely to 'stick', research suggests that more education about environmental issues does not necessarily suggest a long-term change to pro-environmental behaviour (Kollmuss & Agyeman 2002: 257). Through *Sustaining Dunbar's* collaboration with Be Green, the installation of energy efficiency measures created domestic change, although it is unknown whether it also created behaviour change. In its outlook, *Sustaining Dunbar* was more concerned with 'hard' restructuring rather than 'soft' tasks. This is in line with Webb's (2012) assertion that behaviour change is too limiting a concept to conceive of change as it happens in the complex interplay of body, mind and relationships that makes up a person, and collectively on a wider social scale.

*“We see environmental knowledge, values, and attitudes, together with emotional involvement as making up a complex we call ‘pro-environmental consciousness’. This complex in turn is embedded in broader personal values and shaped by personality traits and other internal as well as external factors. ”* (Kollmuss & Agyeman 2002: 256)

The external factors shaping pro-environmental consciousness resonate with Bourdieu's (1990) habitus shaped by socioeconomic structures, which make habits extremely difficult to change without the corresponding changes in infrastructure and the economy. The irreversible crises of the biosphere and global systemic changes, which have been predicted in the case of runaway climate change, are still the subject of much



confusion, as a quote by a staff member within East Lothian Council suggests.

*“In terms of adapting to climate change, the indicators for that are not so clear. More work needs to be done, understanding what it means – is it just dealing with flooding incidents and things, you can measure those sorts of issues. But the wider one’s about what’s gonna be the impact on soils and biodiversity and that sort of thing, and that’s much more longer term trends, which - we haven’t really got a handle on that. In many ways the potential climate impacts on East Lothian could be quite benign – in fact, it might even encourage more tourism and things, because it’s too hot for people to go to Spain in 2030 or 40 – then somewhere like Edinburgh or the South coast of England might be having more Mediterranean type climate even, and somewhere like East Lothian could well have, as I say, a very nice climate.” - Donald*

The quote suggests that Donald regarded climate change as an environmental issue, which is different from our economic systems and present and future livelihoods. The connection between ecospheric changes and their impacts on the availability of natural resources, economies and food production which sustain local livelihoods has not fully been made. This is resemblant of research findings, albeit of the United States, which attributed only “moderate risk perception” to the majority of the population, because “62% of Americans associated global warming with geographically and psychologically distant impacts, generic increases in temperature, or the separate problem of ozone depletion” (Leiserowitz 2006:62). Hence, there appears to be a categorical distinction between environmental threats such as climate change on the one hand, and social and economic issues of immediate concern on the other hand. Sustaining livelihoods in a changing global environment, accompanied by the necessarily shift towards sustainable practices in national and international infrastructures, would require 'hard' infrastructural and economic changes that enable an alignment between sustainable practices and dwelling activities through green jobs, which has been termed a 'green collar economy' (Jones & Conrad 2009). Currently, the contribution community projects can make to such a shift, beyond offering education and training, is very limited, as it needs the co-operation of educational institutions, organisations and governments to



create a green labour market.

Schwartz et al.'s (2000) categorisation of values provides a lens through which to interpret the values promoted and expressed through the projects/cases. The categories 'self-enhancement' and 'self-transcendence' have been linked to different kinds of 'worries' related to environmental concerns, as discussed in the beginning of this chapter. The effect of values held by individuals, and promoted by organisations, are crucial in fostering sustainability learning. In terms of values being promoted, Holmes (2011) suggests that it is important to differentiate between intrinsic and extrinsic values in environmental messaging to minimise so-called rebound effects. For example, if an environmental message, such as a request to install energy efficiency measures at home, is strongly based on the incentive of saving money, then the values communicated are extrinsic (promoting external approval or rewards) and do not prevent the message respondent to engage in a 'rebound effect' - to spend the money thus saved on luxury goods or activities with high amounts of embedded carbon (Chitnis et al. 2012). In contrast, intrinsic values (inherently rewarding) are more likely to encourage the receiver of the message to pursue linked-up environmental behaviours, which are more likely to reduce rebound effects.

However, a certain behaviour cannot in itself indicate whether underlying extrinsic or intrinsic values are present. For example, saving money may not necessarily suggest underlying extrinsic values – saving money can also be linked to conservative values that appreciate frugality. Staff members in *Playbusters* and *Sustaining Dunbar* mentioned using the money-saving incentive as a technique to encourage behaviour change. Given the demographic difference between the locations in which the two projects were situated, their use of this incentive should perhaps be weighted differently. In *Playbusters*, there was a contrast between the values that interview respondents thought the organisation should hold, and the values some respondents ascribed to the target audience of the organisation. Values ascribed to *Playbusters* - challenging stigma, promoting a positive image of the East End and its inhabitants, and valuing assets - were associated with values of universalism (social justice, equality) and benevolence (loyalty). On the other hand, values ascribed to *Playbusters'* target audience – not

wanting to be seen to acquire second-hand clothing, or litter picking – are associated with achievement (success) and self-direction (freedom, choosing own goals). The contrast illustrates a discrepancy between 'is' and 'ought', or the intentionality of the organisation in promoting more universalist values in an area where self-enhancement values are of more psychological importance than in more affluent areas. Furthermore, **Playbusters** had a strong focus on promoting self-transcendence values – and perhaps macro-worries – through the organisation's focus on personal development and social justice. Benevolent, pro-social values appeared to be more prominent within the organisation than universalist pro-environmental values, which could be connected to issues around multiple deprivation which affected the organisation's areas of influence. Research around a possible connection between material affluence, or lack thereof, and pro-environmental values, attitudes or behaviours is not entirely conclusive. For example, research suggests that people from poorer countries rank environmental issues lower among the most pressing problems than people from wealthier countries; however, all people rate pro-environmental issues high when asked to rank the severity of different problems (Kollmuss & Agyeman 2002: 244). Overall, there appears to be some consensus that "pro-environmental attitudes can be predicted based on the idea that economic affluence allows people to shift their attention from their own material survival to the survival of their natural environment" (Kemmelmeyer et al. 2002:277). However, the 'Greendex' survey painted a more nuanced picture, according to which the consumer behaviour in some majority world countries is easily influenced towards more pro-environmental choices, whereas the least sustainable consumer behaviours were found in some minority world countries (National Geographic & Globescan 2014:8). How wealth and poverty influence pro-environmental choices is not a clear-cut issue; cultural factors and underlying values may play an important role. It has been suggested that inequality tends to promote extrinsic values on both ends of the spectrum (Holmes 2011); hence creating a more equal society could help to promote intrinsic values in the long term.

Within ***Sustaining Dunbar***, staff members' willingness to use the money-saving incentive to engage local residents has complex implications. No data exists on so-called 'rebound effects' among local residents who saved money as a result of engaging

with *Sustaining Dunbar* and as argued above, it is debatable whether saving money always promotes values of self-enhancement. In line with frugality, depending on the life circumstances of any given individual, saving money could also be linked to 'dwelling' activities, reducing the amount of paid work necessary to sustain a livelihood. Dwelling activities are clustered around traditional values of conservatism, in the sense of securing livelihoods. It might therefore be helpful to look at clusters of values or 'valuescapes' in order to evaluate values in relation to, and not in isolation from, each other. Since *Sustaining Dunbar* adopts a systemic view, money-saving incentives could enhance universalist values if they are part of a largely universalist agenda such as the 'Transition' model, where livelihoods are aligned with sustainable living through 'green jobs'. In an economic model geared towards equality, sustainability and de-emphasising growth, leisure activities are no longer necessarily linked to high resource consumption, because "economic welfare, in the form of increased household utility, can increase indefinitely as technology advances even while economic output stays fixed and resource use declines, provided only that households attain some 'satisficing' level of physical consumption" (Saunders 2014:230).

In *Playbusters*, there appeared to be a distinction between more 'traditional' environmental values which were passed on primarily through work which preceded the CCF-funding, and the work that happened as part of the CCF-project which was considered to be more contemporary. Alternatively, activities were perceived to reflect traditional and innovative values at the same time, as in the swap shop, which promotes an old exchange system in a fresh and novel way, or community gardens, which pass on traditional knowledge about food growing in a relatively recently invented, urban context. *Playbusters* staff members were perhaps placing more of an emphasis on intensive, short-term engagement through inventive approaches. Cross-generational learning was enabled by bringing together younger and older members of a community - those least concerned with dwelling activities in peak efforts to sustain livelihoods within families. Schools are hubs of community life, and therefore it is not surprising that all community projects observed interacted with local schools in some ways. In Dunbar, part of the distinction between 'tradition' and 'renewal' appeared to be grounded in demographic differences between those residents whose families had been residents

of Dunbar for generations, and relative newcomers, who also tended to be more affluent. Since *Sustaining Dunbar* appeared to be more associated with 'new Dunbar', the organisation had to put effort into networking with existing organisations, some of which were more established. These findings indicate that within their projects, community projects can promote traditional values on the one hand, and openness to change on the other hand. The appreciation of traditions and renewal perhaps reflect an urge to change in the sense that both the past and the future represent something 'other than present'. Community projects feature prominently within the social innovation literature (see e.g. Moulaert et al. 2005), but their traditional elements are less frequently mentioned. The opportunity to foster inter-generational learning is a strength of community projects, as it breaks down perceived barriers between children's education and adults' education, as well as between theoretical and practical learning. Hence, community projects occupy a particular role within the educational landscape, offering opportunities for lifelong learning towards a changed, sustainable society, while being embedded in localities.

An amalgamation between traditional and novel approaches is perhaps suggestive of a wish to diverge from present unsustainable practices. Since conservation, mainly in relation to ecological habitats, is a big part of SD (La Court 1990), there might be an affinity between some elements of 'conservatism' and SD. Equally, in the social domain there is an affinity between sustainability and conservatism, in the sense of conserving those traditions which are relevant to SD - such as those traditions which can be traced back to time periods when fossil fuels were scarce or unavailable. On the other hand, SD is often described as looking ahead, or "choosing our future" (Scottish Government 2005). The suggestion that values around conservatism or traditionalism can be reflected within sustainable practices suggests that the findings that values of traditionalism are negatively associated with environmental concern and pro-environmental behaviour (Dietz et al. 2000; Schwartz et al. 2000) may not necessarily apply to the wider conceptions of 'sustainability practices' that make up projects, which are not limited to behaviour change and environmental concerns. Elements of traditions and renewal do not only apply to SD, but also to the notion of community: Bauman (2001:34) juxtaposed a 'natural understanding' of bygone community with

attempts to resuscitate or create a new 'community feeling'. Another way of thinking about these aspects of traditions and renewal is that concepts and ideas flow in cycles; while words or the language to describe them may change, some notions emerge, are replaced, and re-emerge. Social individualisation processes (Bauman 2001) came to replace old social patterns of community, which are re-emerging in some places. Change can imply linearity (seeking reference points in the past or imagining the future) or happen in cycles; only replicating present practices implies stagnation. Community projects can drive such change, filling an educational gap with patterns of 'upskilling' and lifelong learning, particularly where traditional skills are passed on from one generation to the next less frequently than they used to. The next chapter will explore the limitations of these kinds of changes, particularly with respect to community projects' potential roles in wider systemic sustainability transitions.

# **CHAPTER SEVEN - Liminal Community Projects: the Relative Marginality of Collective Sustainable Practices**

## **7.0 Introduction**

*“We stand here, on the edge of a knife, and it is our sense of ourselves as kindred with others and as individually responsible for creating meaning in our present place and time that can make a difference in what kind of future we will have.”*  
(Locke 2007:63)

Following on from investigating the content of the case studies in the form of their projects, this chapter is concerned with analysing the role of community projects in wider society. Community initiatives function as green niches within unsustainable hegemonies, and engage in sustainability governance on a local level. According to Haslam et al.'s (2011) group-oriented leadership theory, as governing agents ('leaders'), community organisations must carve for themselves a dual identity both as pioneers and as 'one of us', part of the regions and neighbourhoods they are situated in, in order to engage people. Community organisations are thus at the same time familiar and outsider, occupying liminal spaces in which they can bring people together, while their grant-funded projects are temporarily and spatially constrained. However, community projects carry within them potentials and prefigurations of sustainable practices that could be more widely adopted if social and economic systems changed – or

“blossomed”, to borrow a term from Riddoch (2013) – to integrate them into livelihoods. Within the thesis, the analysis of community projects as budding liminal spaces arose from *RQ 7) What role(s) do community projects play in wider Scottish society, and what are the barriers which limit their impact?* The conceptualisation of community projects as liminal entities is built on the premise that presently, Scottish society, as part of global interlinked economies, is unsustainable, based on the arguments in chapters 2 and 3.

The concept of liminality stems from social anthropological and theological literatures. emerging from the field of ritual studies, where liminality signified a particular state within rites of passage (Van Gennep 1975). Furthermore, liminality also came to have a particular meaning in relation to stages of social change (Turner 1979; Morris 2012), and it is this expression of liminality to which I refer in this chapter. To briefly revisit the argument laid out in chapter 2, international co-ordinated action is required to mitigate climate change and other threats to the biosphere, and local responses to halt or alter this change towards more sustainable trajectories are necessarily limited. Different 'spheres of action' in SD situate community projects in the 'local commons' sphere – 'local' in the sense that community projects are not immediately linked to international politics, and related to 'commons' in the sense that they emphasise collective, rather than individualistic, approaches to SD, and sometimes SD governance. Community projects can highlight human-scale glimpses of resilience thinking, and they tend to be “social innovators” (Moulaert et al. 2005) on a local scale. However, without sufficient action among political and corporate actors to address climate change and implement SD measures on wider, systemic scales (regional, national and global), community projects could become 'stuck in liminality', creating sustainable niches which remain in contrast to the 'norm' of unsustainable practices in wider society. Exploring the role of 'community' and 'the commons' in the face of the biospherical crisis, the concept of liminality enhances the understanding and practice of community sustainability responses in a changing world, which is the unique contribution of this thesis to community literature in SD.

This chapter proposes that community projects are best conceptualised as liminal spaces, in the sense that they can be either part of wider social – and perhaps global –

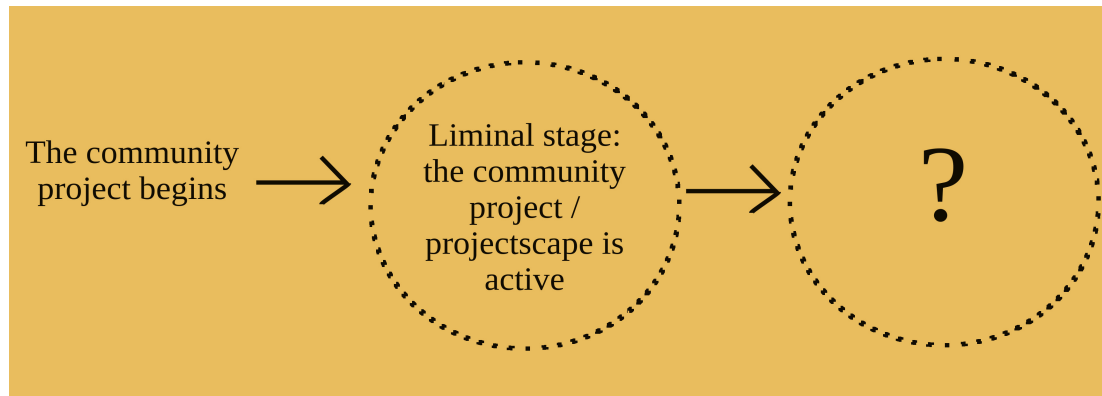
processes of transition towards sustainable societies, or perpetuate prefigurative notions of what-may-be through a liminal 'otherness' which exists within unsustainable societal norms. The chapter then elaborates more explicitly on *communitas*, structure and anti-structure. While the primary aim of this chapter is to conceptualise and analyse a role of communities in society, this is the last of the three chapters (5, 6 and 7) which draw upon and present the case study data, particularly in the two main case studies.

## **7.1 Expressions of Liminality in Community Projects**

In this section, I conceptualise aspects of the case studies through the lens of liminality or 'being-on-a-threshold' (Turner 1979:465). Liminality is implicit in the changing projectsapes of community organisations. Within community organisations, old projects coming to an end and new ones begin, depending on funding streams becoming available and drying up, and on collaboration between project leaders and participants who contribute new ideas. Projectsapes also change depending on different stages in the life cycles of particular projects. Chapter 6 has drawn out snapshots of projectsapes during fieldwork; while this chapter revisits some of these, it focuses more on particular characteristics of the case studies that can be conceptualised as liminal.

While liminality in ritual studies refers to a particular state in the ritualistic cycle, liminality as a state in itself hints at something 'other', diverting from existing norms. The liminality of community projects can be part of wider transition processes, or can be manifest in a project's 'otherness' to the extent that a project's practices differ from its participants' everyday life experiences outwith the project. In a 'high-group' community project, liminality can be manifest through a collective experience (*communitas*) which is differently structured from everyday experience.





*Illustration 19: Liminality in Community Projects*

Illustration 19 outlines the liminal characteristic of community projects for sustainability and climate change. Following the active phase of community projects, the stage of reintegration of a project's legacy, which in ritual theory follows the liminal stage as the “re-aggregation, when they are ritually returned to ... mundane life” (Turner 1979:467), is uncertain, which I elaborate on further on in this chapter. While Turner refers to people undergoing a liminal stage, in this thesis 'liminality' is also applied to spaces, values and practices – in other words, projectscales. Liminality is an analytical concept, rather than something project participants stated to experience, so liminality is not necessarily limited to describing a state people pass through.

Liminality has several characteristics. While the projectscales of community projects for sustainability have a transient aspect to them, some liminal characteristics may emerge more than others in particular projects, depending on the structure and purpose of the project. The characteristics of liminality most relevant to community projects for sustainability and their participants are a state of 'betwixt and between', projects producing *communitas*, and liminality as a stand-alone state.

1) <b>“Betwixt and between”:</b> liminality as an in-between-stage or threshold of wider transition processes with an intent for change (Turner 1975), for example transitions of a socioeconomic or environmental nature, whereby the outcomes (the extent of reintegration of new sustainable practices) into everyday life is uncertain
2) <b>Producing communitas:</b> liminality as a collective process, in which those who enter it form an unstructured social bond, producing a levelling effect (Blackshaw 2010) that is different or 'other' from the social norms of their everyday lives
3) <b>Stand-alone state:</b> liminality in sustainability differs from how it is conceptualised in, for example, ritual studies, insofar as the in-between-state is in itself an outcome. Liminal sustainability produces tangible results such as carbon savings, conservation measures or learning outcomes which may not otherwise have occurred and are beneficial irrespective of whether or not a reintegration process occurs that would enable the learned sustainable practices to become the norm.

*Text Box 8: Characteristics of Liminality in Community Projects for Sustainability*

Drawing upon participants' views from the two case studies *Playbusters* and *Sustaining Dunbar*, I explore to what extent these characteristics and nuances of liminality manifest themselves in these projects.

#### Case Study 1: *Playbusters*

*Playbusters'* projectscape was liminal particularly in the sense of liminality as a stand-alone-state, and as producing communitas. Envisioning wider transition processes was evident in the sense of fostering personal development of young people ('transition into adulthood'), but less so in the sense of wider sustainability transition processes. *Playbusters'* projectscape has already been discussed in detail in chapter 6; in this section, specific aspects that relate to liminality are revisited. *Playbusters* was concerned with improving different areas in Glasgow's East End by focusing on cherishing and fostering local assets. These local assets included spatial improvements, through the creation of innovative spaces such as community gardens or the swap shop. Existing spatial assets were also valued through intensified use; for example, previously underused community halls across the East End were used for *Playbusters'* activities, and an allotment was used for 'Connecting Generations' programmes. Local assets promoted by *Playbusters* also included so-called 'intangible assets' of “skills, knowledge, leadership capacities, experiences, personalities, what we have, what we can bring to the group” (O'Leary et al. 2012:12). Staff member Heather explained that as a voluntary sector organisation, *Playbusters* aimed to value and create assets in the

East End, not “prowling” on the weaknesses of the community, but recognizing the strengths. **Playbusters** engaged in “mini-makeovers” (Interview: Heather) of areas subject to multiple deprivations in Glasgow's East End.

The community gardens provided spaces where people could get together productively with other people, learn from each other and provide a healthy alternative space to the usual hard-pressed life in the East End, one of the most deprived areas in a city which has been noted for its “excess mortality” of up to 30% even when compared with similarly deprived cities (Walsh et al. 2010). Two community gardens were developed with the help of **Playbusters** volunteers, who would help build and set up the gardens, come along to planting days and form organisational committees for the gardens (Interview: Caitlin). The community gardens functioned through partnership work, whereby local organisations and schools took on the maintenance of individual raised beds, but communal work involving the different organisations and individual volunteers was a crucial aspect of the gardens, in form of work days throughout the year (Interview: Caitlin). While food growing activities were emphasised, the social benefits of providing a space to meet were seen as a key aim of the community gardens.

*“It’s quite a deprived area, and there’s clearly a lot of challenges in terms of poverty and addiction and poor health and things like that. And I think that it’s – like there’s such a concentration of places like – pubs and places like that being maybe the main social centre for a lot of people. In a way, as you walk around, that is quite apparent, I think. So I think community gardens are really important, because they provide people with other spaces to meet. I think a lot of the people that have been involved in the new gardens in Parkhead have said things like that- it’d be great to just have somewhere to take their kids and to go and meet other people, a nice outdoor space. So I think it needs lots more of those kinds of things.” - Caitlin*

In other words, **Playbusters'** community gardens provided meeting spaces which offered opportunities to learn new skills in an attractive environment, offering a variety of intangible benefits. Activities conducted in the community gardens did not only

include food growing, but also other practices which invited participants to work with natural materials, such as willow weaving. One of **Playbusters'** community gardens was decorated with carved animal sculptures to make the garden more beautiful.



*Illustration 20: Playbusters - Community Garden, Street View*



*Illustration 21: Playbusters - Animal Sculpture and Flowers in a Community Garden*

When I concluded my fieldwork in spring 2012, the community gardens were not yet established, and I could not collect data about how they were used by the participants over the summer. However, the community gardens were set up as spaces with multiple

uses. They could fulfil a recreational function, but because their access tended to be restricted to communal gardening sessions or organised activities or workshops, they were essentially structured spaces which emphasised communal learning of sustainability practices.

The improvement of spatial assets in the East End was one manifestation of liminality in *Playbusters'* projectscape – not only in community gardens. As previously mentioned, WOTWS's intensive summer programme for young people culminated in a year-long journey exploring elements of sustainability and culminating in their construction of a wildlife garden on a gap site in Parkhead, Glasgow. The construction of seats was avoided, as these were believed to attract people looking for a place to drink alcohol (Interview: Duncan). Instead, the WOTWS group aimed to create an attractive, multi-sensory experience for passers through, as well as improve the site's biodiversity (Interview: Duncan). The gap site transformed into the wildlife garden had been offered to *Playbusters* by Glasgow City Council under the 'Stalled Spaces' programme, which made available spaces earmarked for building development in the future, and offered these spaces to successful applicants, who could use the spaces for projects that were limited in time.

*"It's a stalled space, and so what's the tagline? 'A wee space for a wee while'. So we couldn't put any permanent structures in place as such, anything that was going to be difficult to move, obviously that's going to add to developer's costs and make it less attractive to inward investment."* -  
Duncan

Accordingly, the wildlife garden constructed by the young people was not intended to be a permanent space but, in the short term, it served as a hotspot for biodiversity conservation and social activities with the intent to benefit the wider community. Duncan thought that in some ways the financial recession was helpful in the sense that the financial resources to develop the space were currently limited. The temporary nature of the wildlife garden meant, for example, that the group planted a hedgerow, but no trees that were to reach maturity. The group did not enclose the site with fencing to reflect the open ethos of the group (Interview: Duncan), further emphasising the public

nature of the space. WOTWS came to an end in 2012, but there were plans to make continued use of the resource the wildlife garden presented through a maintenance programme by GGWGEE. The wildlife garden continued to provide a resource for East End residents.

Beyond spatial assets, the development and strengthening of intangible assets, such as skills and psychological benefits, also permeated **Playbusters'** work. For example, **Playbusters'** initiatives to promote local food growing involved work with local groups that were not connected to **Playbusters** to develop their own growing spaces. Increasing the confidence of participants through the volunteer work they do was named by staff members (interview: Heather) as a key objective of the organisation. Sam found that active involvement in the swap shop provided a way for volunteers to develop that confidence.

*“We’ve seen quite a lot of the volunteers that were involved in (the swap shop who) started off really quite quiet and maybe without a lot of confidence, certainly in group situations or kind of speaking. Now you see that they’re just a bit wild, out of control (laughs). ... And it’s amazing, it’s fantastic, they really got a lot more confidence and really participate in the group.” - Sam*

When participating in working parties in different projects such as the community gardens, the wildlife garden and the swap shop, volunteers were able to engage in social learning. Social learning provokes not only a change in understanding, but also a situatedness in a peer group (Reed et al. 2010) – or building *communitas*. Whether in the form of the weekly Environment Group, regular 'Connecting Generations' activities at the allotments, or weekly activities around waste and recycling, there was a rhythm to **Playbusters'** structured group activities that ran as part of the environmental projects. While *communitas* mostly refers to unstructured encounters, where volunteers experienced their lives to be fairly unstructured, participating in a community project offered a more structured or differently structured experience to their everyday lives. For example, some of the volunteers thought that being involved in **Playbusters** was beneficial for them socially, and the alternatives would be detrimental to their health.



*“You know how people are, if they're unemployed they can just sit and booze if they want, if they've got money. And I had money as I'd been working so... I could've boozed all day if I'd wanted and half of it I did. But then it's best you sort of kind of keep your feet on the ground a bit, doing something. Just times of the day that you're going to do something at that time of the day, you know. I suppose when you're meeting people as well.” - Harry*

*“Because I wasn't in paid work, I felt like I needed to do something for myself - not so much thinking about community, but to have a structure to my day, and to be with other people. And then you obviously work with people who are like minded, and then you start meeting more important projects, different projects - so it's like a snowball, it gets bigger and bigger and bigger, and then you are part of something bigger than yourself, totally. And the only way I can describe it is, as a person you don't have much power, but with a group of people, there's a difference, I find, together. So it's good to be part of Playbusters.” - Noemi*

Harry's and Noemi's statements unpack a number of benefits they experienced as a result of his involvement with **Playbusters** – they saw volunteering as giving their day a wholesome structure, and appreciated working alongside other people. Most of **Playbusters'** activities happened during working hours, thereby implicitly inviting mainly participants without regular jobs. From interviewees' responses, it became clear that learning new skills was only one reason for their participation. Volunteers considered the social experience to be an important motivation for participating in **Playbusters'** projects (Interviews: Harry, Noemi, Susan), and the continuity of a group working on a particular project together was deemed to be important by staff members (Interview: Heather). A spirit of *communitas* was encouraged by **Playbusters**, as a 'high-group' organisation who based the majority of their programmes around offering communal experiences to volunteers. The activities offered to **Playbusters** volunteers, and sometimes to the wider community through open events, were usually restricted to working hours and designated evenings. The formation of *communitas* was temporal, with project participants going home at the end of the day, while being encouraged by staff members to put some of the newly obtained skills into practice in their domestic

environments.

In the sense of liminality being a part of wider transition processes, **Playbusters** can only be considered as a driver of sustainability transition to a limited extent. The initial efforts to establish GGWGEE were supported by a 'Transition Network' support worker (Interview: Lynn), but apart from that, the 'Transition Network', or Transition Values, were never mentioned. However, transition still played a role in the organisation in the context of their emphasis on the personal development of volunteers, especially of young people. **Playbusters'** projectscape (including GGWGEE) was geared towards providing opportunities for young people and fulfilled an important function locally in supporting the transition into adulthood of the young participants.

*“How do you become an adult if you do not have the skills to become an adult? How can you develop yourself, it's like the old saying 'give a man a fish and you'll feed him for a meal, give a man a fishing rod and he'll feed himself for a lifetime.’” - Duncan*

*“The government should invest more in the poorer areas (than in the richer areas). I mean it just takes more. You'd invest more in a poorer kid just to get them up to the level of the kid that's getting on well.” - Harry*

**Playbusters'** focus on young people who are transitioning into adulthood was more congruent with the way transition is used in policy contexts (see Mouritsen et al. 2012; Kirk et al. 2013) than with the use of transition in sustainability contexts.

*“Recruiting more volunteers, yeah that would be fine, but I think I would like to do more to support volunteers, em, to have more [volunteer co-ordinators] there so we can really concentrate and have a really thriving young volunteer programme.” - Heather*

Supporting the personal development of young people in deprived areas implicitly promotes intra-generational equity of opportunities, in line with social principles of SD



– but one person at a time, rather than necessarily reaching out to as many people as possible.

In summary, ***Playbusters*** offered liminal spaces through activities in which to support participants' transitions from child to adult, poverty to empowerment, passive to active, intoxication to fulfilment, isolated to socially integrated. The wildlife garden and the community gardens were liminal through creating transformed spaces, allowing passers-by to witness the efforts of volunteers to attract wildlife or grow their own food. In addition, community gardens offered various avenues for engagement and upskilling, engaging collectively in differently structured activities than those that some participants considered to be the main alternative (for example, 'boozing' or computer games). However, there was an implicit manifestation of “the asset movement’s disproportionate focus on the operation of the welfare state, as opposed to the operations of the market” (Friedli 2012:5).

While ***Playbusters*** provided a space for volunteers to spend their time in meaningful, productive ways, it was clear from some participants' statements that one motivation for volunteering was to address the symptoms of long-term unemployment. Addressing market operations would involve questioning why unemployment was rife in the area in the first place, and how it could be tackled. Beyond ***Playbusters*** and other community organisations offering liminal improvements in Glasgow's East End, a stronger political will would be needed to tackle the complex, intergenerational issues that come with multiple deprivation, and in a larger sense, societal inequality.

### Case Study 2: ***Sustaining Dunbar***

***Sustaining Dunbar***'s projectscape was liminal primarily in the sense of the organisation's visions of wider transition processes, reflected in staff members' intent for change to percolate throughout the region of East Lothian. ***Sustaining Dunbar*** provided some opportunities for participants to engage in communal activities, but the community organisation emphasised communal activities (*communitas*) only to some extent, and to a lesser extent the creation of temporary spaces through which sustainable

solutions are made publicly visible. However, the organisation produced and distributed materials which took on this function. ***Sustaining Dunbar*** produced maps and documents containing visions for a future, as elaborated on in chapter 6. The organisation essentially employed a form of grassroots community planning with a strong focus on Transition. ***Sustaining Dunbar*** saw its function in preparing people in and around Dunbar of the challenges ahead (interview: John), thereby implicitly adopting a leadership role within the local community, supporting or linking with other local community groups - an approach had advantages and challenges (see chapter 6). The organisation's long-term vision saw change as inevitable, but in order to strengthen local resilience to environmental threats, change needed to be actively steered towards sustainable solutions. ***Sustaining Dunbar*** therefore acted as a liminal catalyst of sustainable pathways. By putting signposts and structural sustainability measures in place, such as sustainable transport initiatives and energy efficiency, the organisation facilitated small steps for individuals and households to meet future challenges - thereby expressing the characteristic of liminality as a stand-alone-state.

In the town of Dunbar, the physical presence of ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was relatively inconspicuous, in form of a centrally located shop with an office shared with 'Be Green'. While 'Be Green' operated drop-in services, during which their downstairs office was open to the public, ***Sustaining Dunbar's*** upstairs office was generally accessible to the public only during meetings.



*Illustration 22: Sustaining Dunbar - Shop Front*



*Illustration 23: Sustaining Dunbar - Information Stall at a Science Fair*

At the time of research, a new community garden was in planning, but meanwhile the organisation did not manifest sustainable practices through visible spaces. Instead,

spaces which could draw the attention of passers-by were of a 'pop-up' nature, such as stalls at events or the 'Dr Bike' bicycle repair service. Furthermore, **Sustaining Dunbar** operated a public notice board at Dunbar train station, which was regularly updated with related news and events.



Illustration 24: Sustaining Dunbar - Notice Board, Dunbar Train Station

The notice board at the train station, and displays in the shop, were visible evidence of **Sustaining Dunbar's** local activities in these places, more through disseminating information than through creating liminal spaces.

However, **Sustaining Dunbar's** work, as distributed through its printed materials, online presence, and public meetings and events, expressed liminality by driving a local sustainability transition through concrete signposting. A substantial part of **Sustaining Dunbar's** CCF project was about mapping out a utopian vision of local resilience for a post-fossil fuel age, while not working in isolation: project co-ordinator John saw the organisation explicitly as part of a nation-wide agenda around the CCF [Field notes,



***Sustaining Dunbar***, 5.3.2012]. In presentations given to the council and to the public at local events, ***Sustaining Dunbar***'s staff members juxtaposed their sustainability goals with the threat of a dystopian future, the possibility of a collapse of the economic system, and entering an age of resource scarcity – especially 'peak oil' – unprepared, while being faced with the incomprehensible challenges of a world battered by runaway climate change. Examples of this included the imagery of its slides - a burning planet Earth, floods and droughts. This dystopian vision was then contrasted with possible ways to create a resilient community which would be prepared for and able to cope with these challenges. Increasing resilience was a central concept within the organisation's aims, as outlined in its Local Resilience Action Plan (LRAP). The organisation's overall purpose held sustainability objectives at its core, which expanded on 'asset-based' resilience thinking framed around health and well-being to include economic goals as well.

*“The Action Plans will show how we might start creating a more localised, vibrant and resilient local economy which can not only help us to cope with the major challenges which lie ahead but which, we believe, can create significant opportunities – for meaningful work, to develop new skills, to strengthen community networks and working to enhance the local environment.”* (Sustaining Dunbar 2011:1)

The LRAP emphasised that it invites discussion and disagreement as much as agreement (Sustaining Dunbar 2011:1). This reflects some staff members' doubts of the usefulness of self-branding as a 'green' organisation, as discussed in chapter 5. ***Sustaining Dunbar*** aimed to engage people from within East Lothian's Ward 7 in which it operated, and to help the local authority and the national government to identify and remove barriers to sustainable practices and structures. It was thought that unlike East Lothian's Community Planning Partnership (CPP), a small organisation like ***Sustaining Dunbar*** can be accountable to local residents without being tied down by the bureaucratic strings of necessarily representing everybody in their catchment area (interview: Ben). However, at times the organisation's staff members appeared doubtful that their aims had gained sufficient local support in order to roll out sustainable

practices and structures on a large scale, in the same way that sustainability objectives are received with mixed feelings in the wider population.

*“From what I’ve gained and learned, from 1,500 or more people of all ages out there, is that people... love the idea of being more sustainable and green, but the majority of the population just wants to try and live more within their economic means. And ... I think it’s not about who’s been involved and who hasn’t been involved, it really is now about involving key policy and decision makers to make the path a well-blazed one for anyone, no matter who they are and what their situation is, to go down.” - Grace*

**Sustaining Dunbar** existed as a pioneer, a liminal path finder, to facilitate processes of wider regional change which could enable more people to engage in more sustainable practices. The nature of **Sustaining Dunbar's** work involved experimental approaches to local grassroots planning. The materials designed by the organisation were based on the locality and consisted of maps of assets and potential revisioning of the area according to sustainable criteria. For example, maps were designed which highlighted walking routes and bike lanes, instead of highlighting roads for cars. The exact distribution and use of the maps had not yet been completely worked out, but as exploratory tools, they had the side effect that they enabled staff members of the organisation to get to know their catchment area well (Interview: Ben). The participatory street planning event **Sustaining Dunbar** helped to facilitate did not only offer an opportunity for participants to engage in grassroots planning, but also to get together to do so collectively. Beyond this one-off event, the element of collectivity also emerged in the 'Neighbours Together' groups. The communal aspect of 'Neighbours Together' meetings did not evoke a spirit of *communitas* – unlike in **Playbusters'** immersive group activities taking place in community facilities or outdoors, 'Neighbours Together' meetings were held in people's homes and emphasised domestic sustainable solutions of a relatively individualistic nature. **Sustaining Dunbar's** public events and 'Green Drinks', however, were designed to gather people for film screenings, shared food or drinks, thereby producing *communitas* in public facilities such as a local church hall or a pub.

By including a verb (“sustaining”) in its name, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** conceptualised its organisational purpose as fostering a transitioning process which was open-ended. As such, the organisation had a liminal identity, with change being at its core – addressing 'global-commons-sphere' changes by raising awareness of pro-environmental purposefully directed changes, while remaining responsive to local residents' differing priorities. As an organisation, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was conceived to be more a means to an end than an end in itself (interview: Grace). Through actively linking and working closely with existing community groups as well as starting new initiatives, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** worked towards integration in the locality and ensured the continuity of some of its key objectives, where local groups may continue if ***Sustaining Dunbar*** as an organisation should lose its funding and cease to exist in the future. The organisation's teleological nature meant that unlike, for example, local organisations which are custodians of specific assets, such as 'Dunbar in Bloom', the 'Community Woodland Group', or the 'John Muir Trust', ***Sustaining Dunbar*** existed to further and expand on its wide-ranging aims and objectives around sustainability primarily as an enabler.

While supporting and enabling local organisations, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was careful to emphasise that those 'satellite' organisations did not to depend on ***Sustaining Dunbar's*** continuation as an organisation. Elsewhere this approach has been called a 'planned organisational obsolescence' (Ganesh and Zoller 2013). However, the long-term nature of ***Sustaining Dunbar's*** vision and aims meant that the organisation's effectiveness also depended on its relative longevity. As previously mentioned, the 'Dunbar Energy Company' was established with the aim to erect a community wind turbine, the feedback tariff of which could potentially pay for staff members helping the organisation to continue. However, as in their other projects, ***Sustaining Dunbar*** consulted local residents of Dunbar on what they wanted potential income to be spent if the community wind turbine went ahead, and spending potential income on the continuation of ***Sustaining Dunbar*** was only one option.

*“It’s got the potential to create local jobs for local people, but we need to ask people what they want.” - Angus*

Despite these efforts to make the organisation itself more sustainable in the long run, as

a grant-funded organisation which relied almost exclusively on CCF-funding, the role of *Sustaining Dunbar* was potentially temporarily limited. The liminal nature of *Sustaining Dunbar* was therefore also reflected in its precarious status as an organisation. In summary, while *Sustaining Dunbar* functioned as a liminal catalyst towards a regional sustainability transition, supporting a variety of projects around sustainable practices and occasional get-togethers, interview responses suggested that there was a need for more stable structures, such as jobs for sustainability that are integrated in the labour market, to help implement *Sustaining Dunbar's* wider vision.

The two case studies *Playbusters* and *Sustaining Dunbar* have characteristics that can be conceptualised as liminal when seen in the context of the need for Scotland to transition towards a low carbon and sustainable society, as outlined in chapters 2 and 3. However, in some respects the community organisations displayed liminal characteristics pertaining to a stage of organisational development. *Sustaining Dunbar's* efforts to potentially generate income through a wind turbine suggest aspirations to become more self-sustaining as an organisation in the long term. The “double-edged sword of grant funding” (Creamer 2014), or the precarious position community organisations who depend on grant funding find themselves in, has the effect that organisations themselves potentially become temporary, or liminal, phenomena. While Creamer's article about the CCF focused on the bureaucratisation of community groups due to the requirement of managing funds, grant funding may lead to a temporal, short-term nature of community projects. Grant funding enables community groups to conceive of and implement projects; nevertheless organisations may become reliant on repeat funding, or otherwise discontinue their projects. The temporal aspect of liminality was not only apparent in the precariousness of community projects, but also in the various stages of the projects. For example, the setting-up phase of a project can be a significant part of the project itself, as the example from *East Kilbride Development Trust* below illustrates.



In ***East Kilbride Development Trust***, *communitas* and learning was apparent during the construction phase of a project. The organisation's seed saving and community gardening project was at the building stage during the time of fieldwork – organisation members built most of the structures by hand and the building stage was a vital part of the project, to a greater extent than in, for example, ***Playbusters***' community gardens. ***East Kilbride Development Trust*** exemplified that even before the garden was finished – effectively 'transitioning' towards completion - participants acquired skills and built *communitas* by working together, using their expertise and expanding their skills. Building the garden provided opportunities for developing non-propositional knowledges by means of “ways of knowing” (Harris 2007), enhancing the participants' skillfulness both in terms of the construction and the organisation of the project, and in terms of refining their social interactions.

*Text Box 9: Cross Cut: East Kilbride Development Trust*

In ***East Kilbride Development Trust***, the collective element of liminality, *communitas*, emerged again – as previously mentioned, it was a characteristic particularly of the 'high-group' organisation ***Playbusters***. Again, in ***East Kilbride Development Trust***, *communitas* was not unstructured but involved co-ordinated, communal activities which differed from participants' everyday practices.

Another aspect of liminality is marginality in terms of outsiderhood (Turner 1979:97); however, this outsiderhood does not necessarily imply exclusivity, but may be reframed as a quality which should be aspirational and infectious. Receiving Government funding granted legitimacy to community groups, which was reflected in an interview response welcoming the governmental support for green organisations, instead of green aspirations remaining a “personal crank” (Interview: Cath). Nevertheless, some participants in community projects thought they may be perceived as 'other' than the mainstream, evidenced by concerns of interviewees who did not wish to be perceived as a “hippy” or very “green” (Interviews: Grace; Fiona). Challenging the status quo was essentially a funding criteria for CCF projects – the Scottish Government's requirements to reduce carbon emissions implies a deviation from 'normal' practices, in order to pioneer relatively marginal practices which would ideally become the 'new normal'.

In summary, the case studies illustrate that community projects may be conceived as liminal spaces in which sustainability skills may be learned and practised that may not be taught in, for example, schools or higher education institutions. Simultaneously, community projects affect the areas in which they are located by opening up spaces of

'budding potentialities' and social innovation (Moulaert et al. 2005). These new potentialities may manifest themselves through a physical transformation of spaces, as can be seen in community gardens, or through activities which are promoted locally. Changing places offer opportunities to create different kinds of spaces and new ways to think about planning (Brückner 2011:190), for example in an urban environment, where unused spaces are transformed by community organisations.

Even though all of the community gardens were constructed on land which was made only temporarily available, and whose fate was uncertain in terms of city development, they provided liminal glimpses of potentialities, or 'prefigurations' of “embedding envisioned future modes of social organisation into the present” (Ince 2012:1646). Community projects are liminal in the sense of being marginal, because the scale on which community projects operate is insufficient in facilitating a mass cultural shift towards sustainability thinking which would influence Scottish and global politics in the longer term. Grant-responsive community organisations may play a role in rehearsing, through *communitas*, a 'commons mindset', by asking participants to think in terms of the projects' benefits for the group or the wider community, of being part of something bigger, rather than only considering their individual benefits in participating in a project.

## **7.2 Discussion: Community Projects as Liminal Time-spaces Within Unsustainable Systems**

In this chapter, I suggested that community projects for sustainability exemplify liminality in three different ways – spatial, temporal, and potentially as catalysts of transitions towards more sustainable pathways. Often relying on precarious grant funding (suggesting temporal constraints), community projects sometimes utilise spaces which are liminal in a sense of a spatial in-betweenness, unused pieces of land which community projects were given permission to use for some time (suggesting both

temporal and spatial constraints). As liminal place-builders, community projects can play a role in transforming cities and landscapes through the unfolding of their projectscapes. Creatively transforming spaces into places conducive to health (as in the urban organisation *Playbusters*) can not only address the symptoms of long-term unemployment, but potentially counteract the effects of anticipated ecosystem collapse (Poland et al. 2011). Purposeful place-building, as exemplified by community gardens, has been named as an important factor in building community (Firth et al. 2011).

Liminal place-building takes on multiple functions in cities, described to be particularly unsustainable spaces, given that cities consume much more food and energy than they produce and can be conceived as “a parasite on its immediate environment” (Broto et al. 2012: 853). In an urban context, urban community gardens may thus present some of the most prolific examples of liminal spaces with a sustainable flavour, within unsustainable environments. Urban community gardens are often cited as providing spaces which serve as transmitters, media and platforms for different topics such as urban ecology, neighbourhood design, local knowledge transfer or intercultural communication (Müller 2011:32). The collective element of liminal sustainable spaces within urban environments, inviting people to form communities of practice or simply gather to enjoy the spaces (these are not mutually exclusive) enables learning in a social context. These liminal spaces are fragile, constantly shifting, and (if tied to grant funding) may also be precarious: "the politics of relational space emphasise the constructiveness of things, the fact that identities are constantly being formed, and that space is always being produced" (Franklin et al. 2011:360).

Community projects also create liminal time zones. Temporal liminalities (or 'liminoid' events) are characterised as 'other' from normative, non-liminal social life; night-time or weekends are an example of such differently structured time (Hobbs & Hafdie 2000: 711). Community projects open up liminal spaces for workshops of sustainability through structured activities in which different rules may apply, which was particularly evident in *Playbusters*, but also in the building phase of *East Kilbride Development Trust*. Where co-operation is rehearsed in community projects, it may constitute a practice ground for 'commons thinking'. In addition to 'upskilling' as an element of

learning and teaching within projects (see chapter 6), cooperation requires the social skills of “listening well, behaving tactfully, finding points of agreement and managing disagreement, or avoiding frustration in a difficult discussion” (Sennett 2012:6). Community projects, with respect to co-operation and collective efforts, constitute a space in which participants can 'upskill' not only their practical skills, but also their social skills. With an emphasis on community in contrast to individual action, and differently structured activities that stand in contrast to everyday practices, *communitas* occurs when people meet, learn and share skills in designated places.

Project activities on the one hand bring together people of different generations, multiple ethnicities and different social classes; on the other hand a small number of gender-specific or age-group related activities on offer allow situations in which different kinds of bonding and trust may occur. By breaking up familiar circles and forming new relationships, *communitas* within these liminal time-zones may foster increased tolerance, mutual support and understanding. Furthermore, group identities may be formed (“*Playbusters* volunteers”, or “green” activists in *Sustaining Dunbar*). Collective action was expressed in these temporal communities of practice - community projects constitute collective spaces, and “ritual makes expressive cooperation work” (Sennett 2012:17). The notion of *communitas* aids the understanding not only of these temporarily constrained acts of togetherness, but also differentiates these from wider, normative structures - hence *communitas* has been said to express 'anti-structure' (Turner 1975). Anti-structure is expressed through an unstructured state, for example, in nightlife economies, where revellers form “an unstructured community of equal individuals who submit together to the general authority of hedonism fronted by the ritual elders” (Hobbs et al. 2000:711). In the context of community projects for sustainability, *communitas* was expressed through a differently structured state, where prevailing everyday social norms were subverted – in this liminal realm, food was not purchased in supermarkets, but grown in raised beds; waste was not thrown away, but turned into crafts; clothes were not bought new, but swapped between owners.

Some potentially problematic aspects of *communitas* include potential boundaries of communities of practice which can form 'in-groups' in Haslam et al.'s (2011) sense -

despite aspirations for inclusion, in-groups may lead to a degree of exclusivity. Furthermore, *communitas* has the potential to temporarily mask existing inequalities, without adequately addressing them in the long term. Again, its relationship to 'commons thinking' is present but incomplete, partly because the temporal and spatial constraints may prevent the formation of long-standing, enduring relationships.

“Superficial social relations are one product of short-term-time; when people do not stay long in an institution, both their knowledge of and commitment to the organization weakens.” (Sennett 2012:8)

While Sennett refers to organisations which act as employers, volunteering is even more transient; subjected to changing life circumstances, previously committed volunteers were no longer able to dedicate their time to a community project (observed in *Playbusters* and *East Kilbride Development Trust*).

The third aspect of liminality lies in the contribution of community projects in a transition process towards more sustainable societies. The projects serve as a reminder that complex, global themes are frequently encountered in local proximities. For example, issues surrounding energy generation and climate change are never far away in the communities surrounding Dunbar, because of its proximity to the Lafarge quarry, Scotland's biggest carbon emitter, and Torness, one of Scotland's last two remaining nuclear power stations (Young & Young 2012:15). While climate change mitigation practices remain a societal imperative, adaptation is likely to be at the forefront of future environmental challenges. As the unsustainable hegemony of economic growth, fuelled by consumption, is perpetuated within mainstream culture by political and cultural leaders, relatively small-scale projects and practices with different, sustainable visions present novel “green niches” (North 2011; Smith 2006) which differ from, yet seek at the same time to construe themselves to be part of and transform social norms.

The very nature of community *projects* has been described as a social construct; a project used to refer to an unfinished artistic endeavour, but has come to mean an open, malleable transitory process which is complementary to and connects with different

areas within society (Werner 2011:56). The positive potential of community projects to create liminal spaces for sustainability needs to be recognised and supported by national and international interventions for systemic change. In social terms, such as addressing widespread inequalities, community projects valuing assets and thereby creating liminal spaces of mutual support create a kind of sanctuary; however, they are not enough to tackle social and environmental challenges on their own.

“A reminder, where that is needed, that materially deprived communities are rich in relationships, resourcefulness and creativity. That coming together to change things for the better is inspiring and empowering. Many such projects provide an urgently needed sanctuary, a refuge from grim circumstances and respite from class disadvantage. But, it is the responsibility of public health to distinguish between providing ‘escape for some’, while leaving the system that produces the need for escape intact, and providing leadership.” (Friedli 2012:9)

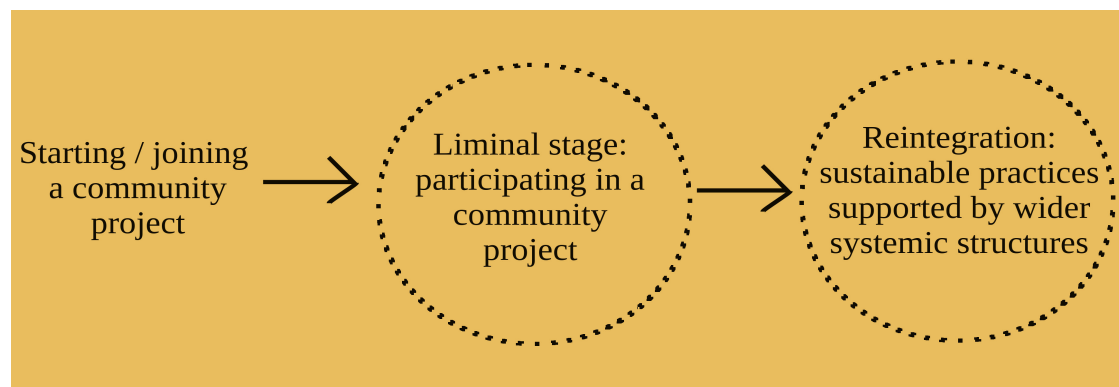
In environmental terms, perhaps the largest barrier to systemic changes is the short time-scale in which these changes need to happen in order to effectively prevent irreversible damage to the biosphere. At the current rate of biodiversity loss, climate change and nitrogen and phosphorous release (Rockström et al. 2009), a radical paradigm shift (Kuhn 1970) in social, economic and infrastructural domains is imperative to minimise human suffering and ecological degradation in the future.

With respect to their roles in society, community projects are in a difficult, paradoxical position. They construe themselves as an integrated part of the wider communities they are part of, and at the same time as pioneers that occupy an outsider status. In this they are not alone; sustainability activists struggle to shake off marginal roles as “hippies” or “cranks” while at the same time defending their alternative identities. There is an internal tension within “sustainability activism” which goes back to its roots and history. Having originated in counter-cultures of traditionally more antagonistic environmental activism (North 2011), some new forms of sustainability activism attempt to reach out and engage more participants, with the ultimate aim to mainstream sustainable practices. According to Turner, a feature of liminality is outsiderhood (1979:97), and community projects and activism for sustainability reflect to some extent a liminal,

marginal role which breaks with unsustainable practices of the past and points towards more sustainable visions of the future. Where *communitas* emerged within these liminal spaces and activities, this enabled individuals to experience a different way of being. However, the lessons learned from this 'stepping outside' of societal norms require other pathways and continuity outwith community projects in order to catch on more widely.

“In order for CCF initiatives to have a significant influence on local lifestyles more broadly, as opposed to isolated behaviours of certain individuals, projects need to be a small part of a much stronger and longer-term sustainability narrative.” (Creamer 2014:14)

According to ritual theory, liminality as being one out of of several stages of wider processes of change, followed by a reintegration phase. However, reintegration pathways, of the learning that comes out of community projects, would need to involve anchoring sustainable practices in wider societal structures, as suggested in illustration 25.



*Illustration 25: Liminality and Reintegration towards a Sustainable Society*

A reintegration stage of the sustainable practices learned in community projects could take many forms; one of those forms, which would further perpetuate the notion and importance of community, could be a focus on communal assets -or commons- as longer lasting pathways towards governance of the commons (see chapter 8). There are parallels - both in kind and in terms of their etymological roots - between the concepts of community, *communitas*, and the commons. All of them propose alternatives to

atomistic, individualised views of human being-in-the-world, which arguably have been perpetuated by the competitive 'race to the bottom' of neoliberal economics. However, an increased common ownership of resource systems (Ostrom 1990) would require communal solutions, both in terms of multi-level governance of the 'local commons' and the 'global commons'. While asset transfer to community groups is rare, it had been achieved in Dunbar, as Dunbar's community woodland was passed over to the community of Dunbar in 2007. Catriona, who was involved in the Dunbar Community Woodland group, evoked past times where communal resource management were an economic necessity.

*“100 years ago, 200 years ago people would do things collectively, would have the common land, the common grazing land. But then, I don’t want to start sounding political here, but as capitalism got a grip, then people would lose sight of that. But I mean – there’d always be feudalism of course. ... I think in days gone by there’d be much more a sense of community, because people depended on each other so much more. So I think we’re just going away from that, and that’s possibly the reason that – I mean, but communities grow.” - Catriona*

In her statement, Catriona directly connected common resource management with the concept of community. All of the community or wildlife gardens the other case studies were built on temporarily leased land, or through programmes such as Glasgow City Council's 'Stalled Spaces'. In this context, community and *communitas* emerged as relatively transient phenomena, but they did not evolve beyond their liminal status. However, especially the community gardens involved 'commons thinking' in practice. Eizenberg (2012) argues that community gardens constitute moments of space of 'actually existing commons' that counteract hegemonic spaces that are outside the public-private dichotomy.

“Actually existing commons are live relics of the ideal of the commons; they are never complete and perfect and may even have components that contradict the ideal type” (Eizenberg 2012:765).

The temporal limitations of the community gardens that emerged in the case studies constitute incomplete, transient commons. The small scale, and grant-dependent limited



time scales of liminal community projects offer opportunities for experimentation in 'commons thinking' and practice. Some potential pathways for longer-term reintegration of these experimental endeavours to foster wider societal changes towards sustainability are explored in chapter 8.

However, even if more permanent pathways would become available to build communities and governance of the local commons, a rapid shift in global institutions towards making sustainable practices the norm in the governance of the global commons – in particular, preventing climate change and widespread ecocide. Communities open up alternative ways of sustainability visioning and practice to either state supported infrastructural change or individual behaviour change (Moloney, Horne, and Fien 2010, Heiskanen et al. 2010).

"[S]ustainable communities need to be viewed as communities of learning in which overlapping relational practices are constantly in the process of being established around a common theme of sustainable living." (Franklin et al. 2011:361)

While learning is a crucial element of community projects for sustainability, learning processes are not necessarily individualistic, but can be of a social nature and can include explicit 'high-grid' engagement with political processes. Lessons learned from community project practices have the potential to inform more locally responsive, decentralised, bottom-up models of sustainability governance. Low carbon communities can indeed play a significant role in climate change responses, as suggested by Moloney et al. (2010) and Heiskanen et al. (2010).

Furthermore, 'transitions' in SD tend to refer to new institutions and forms of governance (Baker 2006:187), and community projects can both shape participation in political issues of global and national concern, and constitute a form of civil activism in their own right. However, given the state of nested ecological systems within which we interdependently co-exist, the impact of community projects remains relatively small within the 'global commons' sphere. If national and international political institutions do not act swiftly and decisively, community initiatives, despite their local contributions towards sustainability thinking and practice, are not in a position to prevent the multiple

emergencies our biosphere faces from crossing a point of no return at which the delicate ecological fabrics unravel.

## CHAPTER EIGHT - Retracing the Journey, Signposting Next Steps

### 8.0 Introduction

*“Words, words, words  
On cracked old pages  
How much of truth remains?  
If my mind could understand them,  
And if my life pronounced them,  
Would not this world be changed?”  
(Seeger 1967)*

This thesis conceptualised community projects for climate change and sustainability as liminal spaces, expressed through projectsapes which can create temporary sustainable spaces and enable participants to engage in sustainable practices. In this chapter, I discuss the thesis' central notion of spatial and temporal liminality of community projects in relation to potential steps forward in practical terms, and in this area of research. I begin by summing up the preceding chapters and then discuss some of the implications of the findings which have emerged, including some of the limitations of this research project. Following on from this, I make some tentative suggestions for possible practical pathways concerning implications for policy makers, and suggestions for further research with regard to community organisations who promote SD and tackle climate change - including, but not limited to those who are funded by the CCF.

## 8.1 Retracing the Journey

Before discussing potential implications and ways forward, it is helpful to briefly recapitulate the preceding chapters to retrace the journey towards the empirical findings and analysis within this thesis. In this section, I also revisit the relevant research questions which have been addressed in each chapter.

Chapter 2 framed RQ4 (*What role(s) do community projects play in wider Scottish society, and what are the barriers which limit their impact?*) through a literature review. I began the chapter by outlining a systemic view on the unravelling biosphere, thereby touching upon multiple interconnected crises, which include irreversible climate change and potential threats to life on earth as we know it. The notion of 'communities' has gained relevance in sustainability literature. The notion of community projects as liminal agents of sustainability potentials is a new perspective which adds to pre-existing conceptualisations of low-carbon communities (e.g. Heiskanen et al. 2010; Peters et al. 2012), community resilience (e.g. Wilding 2011) and localisation (e.g. Dawson 2006; North 2010; Spratt 1958), sustainable communities as a model of governing neighbourhoods (e.g. Barton 2000), and asset-based community development (e.g. O'Leary et al. 2011). The notion of communities as liminal spaces implies that community projects can be part of wider transition processes towards sustainable societies, but not necessarily so. There are spatial and temporal elements to community projects, opening up new spaces that 'prefigure' (Ince 2012) sustainable practices within existing social and economic systems.

Chapter 2 also framed RQ2 (*In what ways do community projects facilitate learning about issues of sustainability and climate change among their participants?*). Community projects offer opportunities for 'learning sustainability', thereby closing a gap in opportunities within mainstream curricula in Scotland to implement ESD (see McNaughton 2007). Learning as a relational process (Toren 2009; Scott Cato 2013), and through production (Ingold 2011) involving hands-on activities, includes site-specific learning and place-based relationships (Higgins 2010; Piersol 2014; Scott Cato 2013). Thus conceived, learning has a phenomenological underpinning, whereby mind-

body-dualism gives way to an intersubjective embeddedness of being-in-the-world (Ingold 2000; 2011). Furthermore, while implementation of governance of the commons (Ostrom 1990) faces barriers in terms of bringing assets into communal ownership, through their emphasis on collective activities and spaces, community projects can foster a “commons way of thinking” (Kenrick 2009). The notion of the commons was explored in relation to a socio-ecological systems model adapted from Bronfenbrenner (1979), whereby local and global agents primarily respond to spheres of local or global commons. According to this model, as local agents, community groups primarily engage in governance within the sphere of the local commons such as bioregions, local ecosystems, cultural and geographical assets and education. While embedded in global commons such as the biosphere of the planet, local groups' potential for agency within this sphere is much less well developed, compared to global agents (such as nation states and international organisations) who are much better placed to effect change on a large scale.

Chapter 3 again addressed RQ4 (*What role(s) do community projects play in wider Scottish society, and what are the barriers which limit their impact?*), by introducing the CCF and the political significance of communities in Scotland. Through the CCF, the Scottish Government fostered community engagement while addressing a global issue, climate change, thereby recognising the local sphere as being nested within the global sphere. The chapter elaborated on the CCF as an innovative policy initiative which was fully publicly funded and allowed community organisations substantial leverage in the design of their projects. The CCF thereby forms part of the Scottish Government's tool box to meet the targets of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act (CCSA) and international obligations, while enabling pre-existing and new community organisations to construct and shape narratives around sustainability primarily among project participants and, to the extent of the visibility and public nature of the activities conducted and places transformed by community groups, also in their wider locations. An analysis of successful applicants to the CCF highlighted that the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions was more measurable in some projects than in others, depending on the types of activities they conducted. Brook Lyndhurst (2011) wrote in their evaluation of the CCF that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions were only part of the value of community projects. CCF-funding

allowed community organisations to promote sustainable lifestyles, well-being and community cohesion (3).

Chapter 4 introduced the research methods chosen, which included a case studies format, fieldwork and semi-structured interviews, and which shaped the findings by focusing on narratives within community projects. I adopted transdisciplinarity as a guiding principle for my own positionality during fieldwork, and for the incorporation of different knowledges, such as scientifically robust accounts of a changing climate and local knowledges in the design of the research project. Taking different knowledges into account allowed me to pay attention to narratives emerging within the case studies in their own terms, while contextualising community projects within a wider discourse around climate change and sustainability. In the empirical chapters 5, 6 and 7, narratives that emerged within the case studies were unpacked, highlighting community projects' strengths and limitations in a context of wider unsustainable systems.

Chapter 5 empirically addressed RQ1 (*How do the different styles of leadership within CCF projects impact on the engagement of project participants?*). Organisational structures and leadership styles within the case studies, as well as the involvement of volunteers, impacted on the community organisations' capacities as agents of sustainability governance in their localities. The case studies tended to adopt a shared or multi-level leadership model, which meant that different aspects of leadership, according to Haslam et al.'s (2011) categorisation into in-group prototypes, in-group champions, entrepreneurs of identity and embedders of identity, were distributed between staff members, according to their role in the organisation. For example, in ***Playbusters*** it was more important for the organisation's project manager to be an entrepreneur and embedder of identity, and more important for project workers to be seen as one of the group who also innovates (in-group prototypes and champions) in relationship with volunteers. Findings on the organisations' scope of governance (influencing participants and emphasising volunteering versus influencing wider social structures) affirmed Heiskanen et al.'s (2010) differentiation between 'high-group' organisations which emphasise the social, collective aspects of community work, and 'high-grid' organisations which emphasise the transformation of wider social structures

and infrastructures. Within the chapter, part of RQ3 (*How heterogeneous are communities that apply to the CCF?*) was also addressed. **Playbusters** was primarily a 'high-group' organisation, manifested through collective activities and a focus on the central role and personal development of volunteers. In contrast, **Sustaining Dunbar** was primarily a 'high-grid' organisation, in relation to which local opposition may indicate that the organisation perhaps was perceived to not be entirely representative of the local community.

Chapter 6 answered RQ2 (*In what ways do community projects facilitate learning about issues of sustainability and climate change among their participants?*) and partially RQ3 (*How are 'communities' defined in CCF projects?*) through empirical data analysis. Interwoven activities, practices and values found within the case studies were explored, through the notion of 'projectscapes', which form the basis of community projects as they unfold. Based on Ingold's (2011) notion of taskscapes, projectscapes are patterns of activities and values produced and reproduced within community projects. Propositional or theoretical knowledge and non-propositional or performative knowledge (Harris 2007:3) make up projectscapes, underpinned by values that are produced or reproduced within projects. In the projectscapes of the case studies, values around traditions and renewal were both promoted, for example allotment heritage (**Playbusters**) and linking in with local heritage organisations such as the John Muir Trust (**Sustaining Dunbar**). Meanwhile, innovative projects such as a swap shop (**Playbusters**), and community gardens (**Playbusters**, **Sustaining Dunbar**) were a relatively recent phenomenon. Therefore, the case studies to construed themselves, through the different projects they conducted, simultaneously as innovators and as bearers of traditions. As proponents of SD, community projects can propagate change for sustainability forward in time (innovation) and backward in time (tradition).

Chapter 7 answered RQ4 (*What role(s) do community projects play in wider Scottish society, and what are the barriers which limit their impact?*) from an empirical and analytical perspective, by exploring ways in which the case studies constituted liminal time-spaces within unsustainable systems. The notion of community projects as liminal time-spaces synthesised the preceding chapters to some extent, insofar as the

projectscapes of community projects implementing SD shows some 'in-between' qualities of being-on-a-threshold (Turner 1979). These liminal thresholds were expressed in physical and spatial manifestations of sustainability practices, such as community gardens, swap shops, drop-in advice centres. Liminal thresholds were also expressed through temporal manifestations, such as the activities that made up the projectscapes, particularly in 'high-group' projects that produced *communitas*. Finally, the precariousness of grant-funded community projects implies a degree of liminality in terms of the uncertainty of the future of the projects. Ultimately, liminal characteristics of community projects face limitations with respect to the legacy of the projects, however. The outcomes of community projects, whether in the shape of transformed spaces or participants' learning processes, could be less marginal if they were integrated into wider transition processes towards a more sustainable society. In the following section, I discuss some of the implications for policy makers, for further research which could follow on from these findings, as well as for community organisations with the aim to distribute more of the site-specific learning that has come from their various projects.

## **8.2 Signposting Next Steps**

The primary limitation of community projects as SD agents, in particular in relation to tackling climate change, lies in their marginality in the light of insufficient governmental action on sustainability and climate change on a national scale, and co-ordinated international action on a global scale. Community action on climate change and sustainability has necessarily limited effects and faces substantial boundaries to effecting change. For example, due to the wider economic and infrastructural set-up, high-carbon lifestyles are the norm within the United Kingdom and, if past trends continue, might be on the rise because according to Druckman and Jackson (2009), "CO<sub>2</sub> emissions attributable to households were 15% above 1990 levels in 2004" (2066). Druckman and Jackson's (2009) findings further suggest that household emissions increase with increasingly disposable income levels (2072). This suggests



that in light of the need to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions, decreasing inequalities would require tackling deprivation, while simultaneously addressing high-carbon lifestyles of high-income households. CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions reduction achieved by community projects contribute to global action on climate change especially through “hard measures” (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:37), such as energy efficiency installations. However, while community-level carbon governance had various benefits through the unique role of community organisations in sustainability governance, as seen in chapter 5, “the practical challenges involved [in community carbon governance] cannot be underplayed, and community capacities need to be understood in relation to those of other governance actors and the various enabling resources they have control over” (Walker 2011:781). The severity of the probable impacts of climate change (see IPCC 2007, 2013), which is likely to affect all areas of Scotland's society, economy and ecosystems, needs to be reflected in concerted efforts by the Scottish Government to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Community projects can play another liminal role: they are well placed to operate on a threshold, combining elements of climate change mitigation and adaptation through meaning-making processes (Russell 2013:2) at a local level. On a national scale, however, Delina and Diesendorf (2013) suggest that a 'wartime'-scale economic and infrastructural change would be required to achieve climate change mitigation on the scale which would be necessary to remain within the safe boundaries of two degrees of global warming if other nations followed the same pathway. Such concerted change would necessarily involve all sectors of society to render climate governance a democratic, participatory process.

“Although the active drive towards the transition within a very short period of time is envisaged, in the war model, as an executive national government-led effort, all levels of government, from local to state/provincial to national, as well as international agencies, must be involved, along with civil society and the private sector. Getting all these acts done in a coordinated and democratic/participatory manner is definitely a huge challenge.” (Delina & Diesendorf 2013:378)

The challenge inequality presents to tackling climate change does not only hold within

the United Kingdom or Scotland, but also globally where fair 'Earth-share' is a moving target (Rees 2014:3). The resources an individual in a given household or country can fairly use depends on numerous fluctuating factors, such as decreasing non-renewable resources, rising CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions and declining biodiversity. As a solution, Rees (2014) advocates 'degrowth', or actions to “deliberately scale back the global economy (or at least reduce the throughput of energy and material) and consider means to redistribute ecological and economic wealth at national and local levels” (15). Literature on degrowth is emerging in SD and environmental economics (see for example Andreoni & Galmarini 2013; Jackson 2011; Videira et al. 2013; Whitehead 2013). In contrast, the Scottish Government's target is to achieve “sustainable economic growth” (Scottish Government 2014b). Potential links between energy use and associated carbon emissions on the one hand and economic growth on the other hand merit more investigation, to identify the best routes to promote social equality and prosperity while reducing emissions according to the national targets of the CCSA. Furthermore, an inquiry into how education across the board - in schools, higher education and at a community level - can connect the 'local' more explicitly to the 'global', thereby improving not only climate literacy, but also sustainability literacy among the Scottish population. On a community scale, over-emphasis on carbon emission reductions “would run the risk of missing opportunities to engage people on sustainable living more broadly” (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:114). Further research by policy-makers and academics could involve identifying strategies for the long-term implementation of ESD. Connecting climate change, sustainability, and the 'local' and 'global' scales might involve an emphasis on “‘learning’ as achieved through experience” (Franklin et al. 2011:347) across educational institutions and settings: through the Curriculum for Excellence in schools, in higher education institutions, and in non-traditional education settings such as community groups.

A pathway to enhancing the impact of community projects for climate action and sustainability could involve moving beyond liminal characteristics of community projects in terms of their spatial resources, and towards permanent asset transfer to communities. The multiple benefits of community mobilisation has been widely reflected on in the literature. The appeal of creating communal membership through

symbolic construction lies in a common identity and rules of solidarity (Gusfield 1975:26). In the case studies, 'high-group' community projects (especially *Playbusters*) emphasised group belonging, and the fact that the projects attracted volunteers to whom this belongingness was meaningful indicates a demand, at least in parts of Scottish society, for tighter social coherence in form of mutually supportive networks. For policy-makers and researchers alike, an inquiry into the absence of community, or potential feelings of fragmentation in parts of Scottish society, could stimulate an in-depth social discourse around creating the conditions for a flourishing society in which citizens and residents are engaged and feel supported. A strand of inquiry which has emerged from the findings within this thesis is the notion of the commons, and what it means to engage in 'commons thinking'. Perhaps 'community groups' are too limiting a unit to engage the Scottish public in 'thinking communally', except where assets have been transferred into community ownership. The Scottish Government recognises the benefits of community land ownership - the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 is due to undergo legislative changes (Scottish Government 2014c) which are to enable ministers to tackle large-scale landownership where the latter poses "a barrier to sustainable development" (Black 2014). Furthermore, expanding on Wightman's (2010) historical account of 'common good' assets, an inquiry into existing common good and potential transfers of ownership to communities might stimulate a longer-lasting discourse into public ownership, co-ownership, and community benefit, as well as into governance of these common goods through local democratic processes.

"'Getting the institutions right' is a difficult, time-consuming, conflict-invoking process ... . New institutional models do not work in the field as they do in abstract models unless the models are well specified and empirically valid and the participants in the field setting understand how to make these new rules work."  
(Ostrom 1990:14)

The notion of the commons provides a useful starting point in expanding the notion of 'community' beyond those groups who are successful at obtaining grant funding, towards planting seeds of long-term, collective management of tangible assets, which can serve to demonstrate what 'community benefit' means in practice.

Another pathway to enhance the impact of CCF-funded community projects would involve removing barriers to multi-level governance. For example, the learning that has come out of CCF-funded projects run by community organisations could be more effectively harvested to inform new policy directions. Community mobilisation for climate change is coherent with SD's principle of decentralisation, which suggests that government services must be assessed at the point of impact, and those people affected by the services should be given the authority to make decisions about those services (Lipsky 1974:304). There appears to be a mismatch between 'official' and 'unofficial' CCF-narratives. 'Official' CCF-narratives promoting the fund on the Scottish Government's website emphasise that the fund "supports communities across Scotland to take action on climate change and move to low carbon living" (Scottish Government 2015). Meanwhile, 'unofficial' CCF-narratives emerge when CCF-officials emphasised that the building of community was an important outcome of the fund, and reported to be "comfortable" to see activities which are not obviously climate change related as part of CCF-funded projects (Meyerricks 2010a). The findings of this thesis suggest that a variety of 'unofficial' narratives emerged within CCF-funded projects. The case studies' projects were comprised of activities which emphasised adaptation and resilience not only to future climate change impacts, but also to predicted resource shortages (*Sustaining Dunbar*). The projects sought to build community coherence, to alleviate symptoms of inequality and relative poverty, and to indirectly promote environmental justice by facilitating the participation of deprived communities in sustainability endeavours (*Playbusters*). Therefore, while the mitigation of climate change was written into the design of CCF-funded projects, the priorities of community projects may have differed in practice, as they were shaped and in turn shaped their localities and the concerns of project leaders.

It was suggested that the impacts of community projects are primarily local - in neighbourhoods, streets, gardens, community centres and households. However, some of their impacts, such as sharing knowledge online and through materials such as *Sustaining Dunbar*'s LRAP, reached a wider audience. The knowledge generated in community projects could inform research and policy practices more strongly if it was more systematically utilised. Drawing upon the knowledge and expertise of community

organisations in order to move towards sustained multi-level governance in SD could involve two distinct, but not mutually exclusive pathways. The first pathway, directed at policy-makers, concerns structural governance mechanisms, and the second pathway, directed at researchers, concerns involving community groups in the design of specific research projects using participatory methods, and thereby enabling community organisations to make their voices heard through the co-production of knowledge.

Addressing the first pathway, this thesis has contextualised the CCF within Scottish and British climate policies, and those within global climate governance and its shortcomings (chapter 4). I suggested that the Scottish Government follows a centralised governance model, within which a commitment to SD has followed an erratic pattern. By focusing on communities as an entity, the Scottish Government has created a notion of local sustainability governance which is separate from the remit of local authorities, yet promotes a collective approach beyond individual behaviour change. The CCF's focus on funding and facilitating community-level projects to reduce carbon emissions can be seen as handing over part of the national government's responsibilities to community groups, whereas funding criteria privilege the notions of community inherent in those groups (Taylor Aiken 2014). However, while especially 'high-grid' community organisations contribute to suggesting strategies for implementing SD regionally, the case of *Sustaining Dunbar* showed that there are currently no consistent avenues for community organisations to get their voices heard at a community planning level. Local authorities and CPPs operate at a level encompassing an entire local authority, thereby excluding community organisations which operate at smaller scales. In addition, currently around 1,200 community councils operate in Scotland, comprised of elected representatives of communities (Scottish Government 2014d). Currently, however, concerns around the legitimacy of these community councils are raised, as frequently community councillors are not in fact formally elected (Watters 2014). Therefore, campaigners call for increasing the accountability of community councils, and the powers given to them (Watters 2014). Evaluating roles of and relationships between community councils on the one hand, and community organisations that have formed around certain practices (such as CCF-funded community organisations) on the other hand, could also help to strengthen the

accountability and functions of both types of organisation. Multi-level governance structures would enable community organisations, or reformed community councils, to be consulted as local experts on planning decisions. However, it would be necessary to find ways of to evaluate the track record and transparency of community organisations with respect to their capacity to deliver local services, to not overburden small organisations with decision-making procedures. It is also crucial to ensure that decision-making procedures reflect the unelected status and arbitrary nature of community organisations, who are not democratically representative of the localities in which they are situated. While public participation in a crucial issue (tackling climate change) is strengthened within those community groups that have been recipients of CCF-funding, community groups are generally only able to mobilise some of the residents in their localities. A broader conceptualisation of multi-level governance would include a strengthening of citizenship and participation across all social areas and institutions, not just community groups. For example, a mixture of public consultations and local referendums could play a role in widening decision-making circles beyond community organisations to the wider public. Ultimately, a democratisation of Scottish society might also involve a decrease in the sizes of local authorities, which would thereby become more accountable to people in Scotland.

A second pathway towards increasing multi-level SD governance, concerns the application of participatory research methods for community-based knowledge creation. New research projects concerning community organisations could involve participatory methods in the research designs. As findings from the case studies *Playbusters* and *Sustaining Dunbar* illustrated, a one-size-fits-all framework for community action such as criteria of nation-wide grants could gloss over existing inequalities: priorities might vary considerably between different community groups, depending on local needs and symptoms of deprivation or privilege.

“(T)he paradigm of citizenship understood as a system of social and political inclusion based on economic redistribution and political participation has been substituted by one that has the objective to ensure social cohesion in societies. This substitution renounces the objectives concerning social justice, fails to face

the tensions of increasing social inequalities and misses the contribution of social innovation and citizens' practices that incorporate counter-hegemonic ideals as equally important to an effective multilevel governance." (Eizaguirre et al. 2012:1999)

In order to move towards multi-level governance in SD, it is necessary to diversify the narratives of, tensions within and barriers faced by community projects to inform policy. To strengthen the voices of community organisations might involve including them directly in the design of research projects around issues that matter to them. An academic research project could, for example, involve community organisations who work on promoting the growing and consumption of local food and food justice in order to identify gaps in the research, and to develop practical suggestions to policy-makers. Climate change mitigation and adaptation relies on public will and knowledge in combination with strategic policies and their implementation. The success of increasing co-operation and multi-level governance will partly depend on the willingness and ability of policy makers and members of the public (including, but not restricted to community organisations) to work together to identify ways to tackle environmental crises. This might involve

“(u)sing community projects as the 'eyes and ears' of government by encouraging them to identify barriers that fall outside their control, and to work with government or others to identify possible solutions. In order for such a feedback mechanism to be effective, it would need to be transparent, active (in that projects could expect a response to concerns raised rather than simply firing them into a void) and result in visible action where significant barriers were highlighted.” (Brook Lyndhurst 2011: 115)

The idea of community projects acting as 'eyes and ears' of Government suggests a way forward in decentralising governance in Scotland. Knowledges generated by community projects (CCF-funded or otherwise) highlight local priorities, injustices and experiences of inequalities, and barriers regarding the implementation not only of climate legislation, but wider issues of sustainability and equality. It could equally be argued

that the Government should serve as the 'eyes, ears and hands' of community projects and the general population by implementing climate change and sustainability legislation in order to prevent widespread suffering of current and future generations.

In conclusion, the findings of this thesis suggest that there are direct benefits of community mobilisation for climate change and SD, but practical action on a policy and international level is needed to avoid community organisations getting 'stuck in liminality', and instead become catalysts which support, and are supported by, wider transition processes towards a sustainable society.

“Community-based or community-level development has ... helped and empowered people, improved services, enhanced self-confidence, harnessed energies for the collective good, influenced policy directions and led to more appropriate research” (Guijt & Shah 1998:8).

However, despite the benefits of community projects, they remain structurally marginal within unsustainable societies, economic systems, and centralised governance processes. While community projects can be beneficial to their participants and localities, as well as facilitating learning around ESD, their impact could be strengthened by aligning wider democratic processes towards multi-level governance in SD, and by including community organisations in the design of new research projects. Presently, liminal characteristics of community projects can be part of, and locally facilitate, wider sustainability transitions, or community projects can remain relatively marginal ('outsider') examples of sustainable practices within an unsustainable Scotland. The literature on communities in relation to SD (chapter 2) was roughly divided into optimistic views of communities as powerful *loci* for building a more sustainable society (see e.g. Barton 2000, Dawson 2006, Hopkins 2008), and analyses which regard communities as political tools within a neoliberal agenda (see Corbett & Walker 2013). The novel contribution of this thesis to the wider SD literature on communities is that community projects for tackling climate change and promoting sustainability fulfil both of these roles: on the one hand, they promote sustainability practices through collective activities (for example, swapping clothes, public film screenings, local food challenges),

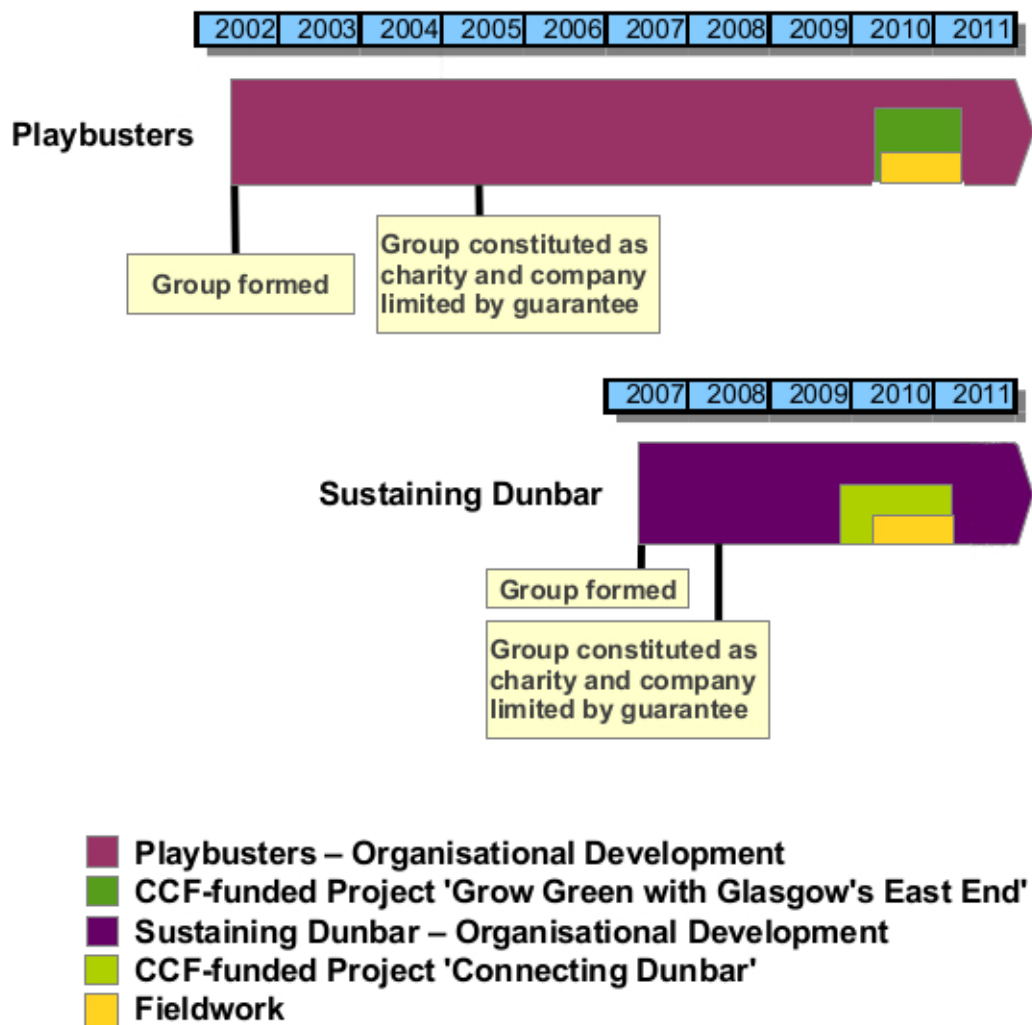


and they open up new social spaces (for example, community gardens and activities in previously underused community centres). On the other hand, if action on pressing SD-related issues such as climate change by the Scottish and Westminster Governments, as well as internationally co-ordinated efforts, are too slow or not concerted enough to prevent runaway climate change and other irreversible issues threatening the biosphere, efforts of community projects to implement SD measures on a local scale will remain meaningful in their local contexts, but in global systemic terms relatively marginal. Brook Lyndhurst (2011) suggested that through the CCF, the Scottish Government may have helped to facilitate the emergence of a culture which might support more top-down governmental measures for climate change mitigation.

“[C]ommunity projects are also preparing the ground for difficult choices that might have to be made by Government in the future – for example, where regulation or taxation may be required to accelerate the adoption of low carbon behaviours (e.g. transport perhaps). ... [C]ommunity projects could play an important role in preparing people for such changes by promoting the notion that environmental responsibility – and carbon emission reduction in particular – is an urgent and pressing issue.” (Brook Lyndhurst 2011:112)

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to answer the question whether, or to what extent, the CCF has achieved a shift in cultural norms towards an increased acceptance of pro-environmental policy changes in Scotland. However, the CCF has strengthened the discourse on community action in Scotland, and enabled the co-production of knowledge within community groups. It depends on the actions of policy-makers, and other public and private institutions which could either support or undermine SD, if this knowledge is built upon and integrated in the facilitation of wider social and economic transition processes towards a resilient, low-carbon society.

## Appendix A: Approximate Timelines of the Case Studies



Source: Multiple (Keep Scotland Beautiful Archive, organisation websites)

## Appendix B: Declaration of Authorship

### 1. Candidate's declarations:

I, Svenja Meyerricks, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 85,000 words in length, has been written by me, and that it is the record of work carried out by me, or principally by myself in collaboration with others as acknowledged, and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September, 2009 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in September, 2010; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2010 and 2014.

I, Svenja Meyerricks, received assistance in the writing of this thesis in respect of language, grammar, spelling and syntax, which was provided by Jason Harrison.

Date: 29/4/15

Signature of candidate:

### 2. Supervisor's declaration:

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of PhD in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Date:

29/4/15

Signature of supervisor:

### 3. Permission for publication:

In submitting this thesis to the University of St Andrews I understand that I am giving permission for it to be made available for use in accordance with the regulations of the University Library for the time being in force, subject to any copyright vested in the work not being affected thereby. I also understand that the title and the abstract will be published, and that a copy of the work may be made and supplied to any bona fide library or research worker, that my thesis will be electronically accessible for personal or research use unless exempt by award of an embargo as requested below, and that the library has the right to migrate my thesis into new electronic forms as required to ensure continued access to the thesis. I have obtained any third-party copyright permissions that may be required in order to allow such access and migration, or have requested the appropriate embargo below.

The following is an agreed request by candidate and supervisor regarding the publication of this thesis:

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Signature of candidate:

Signature of supervisor:

# Appendix C: University of St Andrews - Ethical Approval Letter



University of St Andrews

University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee

19 May 2010  
Svenja Meyerricks  
School of Management

<b>Ethics Reference No:</b> <i>Please quote this ref on all correspondence</i>	<b>MN6388</b>
<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Communities and Climate Change: An Evaluation</b>
<b>Researchers Name(s):</b>	<b>Svenja Meyerricks</b>
<b>Supervisor(s):</b>	<b>Professors Bebbington and Reicher and Dr Rehema White</b>

Thank you for submitting your application which was considered at the Management School Ethics Committee. The following documents were reviewed:

- |                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Ethical Application Form      | 17/05/10 |
| 2. Participant Information Sheet | 17/05/10 |
| 3. Consent Form                  | 17/05/10 |

The University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC) approves this study from an ethical point of view. Please note that where approval is given by a School Ethics Committee that committee is part of UTREC and is delegated to act for UTREC.

Approval is given for three years. Projects, which have not commenced within two years of original approval, must be re-submitted to your School Ethics Committee.

You must inform your School Ethics Committee when the research has been completed. If you are unable to complete your research within the 3 three year validation period, you will be required to write to your School Ethics Committee and to UTREC (where approval was given by UTREC) to request an extension or you will need to re-apply.

Any serious adverse events or significant change which occurs in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration, must be reported immediately to the School Ethics Committee, and an Ethical Amendment Form submitted where appropriate.

Approval is given on the understanding that the 'Guidelines for Ethical Research Practice' (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/UTRECguidelines%20Feb%2008.pdf>) are adhered to.

Yours sincerely

Convenor of the School Ethics Committee

ccs Professor Jan Bebbington  
Professor Stephen Reicher  
Dr Rehema White  
Shona Deigman

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UTREC Convenor, Mansefield, 3 St Mary's Place, St Andrews, KY16 9UY  
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## Appendix D: Acknowledgements

The saying goes that we stand on the shoulders of giants, but more often we stand on the shoulders of our various intersecting communities. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to those who have been supportive along the way in the different stages of this thesis, whether named or unnamed.

In the first instance, I thank the Economic and Social Research Council and the Scottish Government for funding this research project, and the participants in *Playbusters*, *Sustaining Dunbar* and *East Kilbride Development Trust* for inspiring me, for inviting me to participate in the projects alongside them, and for their time and patience in answering my questions.

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